
00024024

24024

Memoir of Richard Cumberland

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 21 October, 2015

MEMOIRS

OF

RICHARD CUMBERLAND.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

CONTAINING

AN ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS,

INTERSPERSED WITH

ANECDOTES AND CHARACTERS

OF SEVERAL OF THE MOST DISTINGUISHED PERSONS OF HIS TIME,

WITH WHOM HE HAS HAD INTERCOURSE AND CONNEXION.

24024

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LACKINGTON, ALLEN, & CO.

TEMPLE OF THE MUSES,

FINSBURY-SQUARE.

00024024

Wright, Printer, St. John's Square.

2403 Memoirs of Richard
12403 Cumberland

MEMOIRS

OF

RICHARD CUMBERLAND.

AT the close of the year 1804, whilst I am still in possession of my faculties, though full of years, I sit down to give a history of my life and writings. I do not undertake the task lightly and without deliberation, for I have weighed the difficulties and am prepared to meet them. I have lived so long in this world, mixed so generally with mankind, and written so voluminously and so variously, that I trust my motives cannot be greatly misunderstood, if, with strict attention to truth, and in simplicity of style, I pursue my narrative, saying nothing more of the immediate object of these memoirs, than in honour and in conscience I am warranted to say.

I shall use so little embellishment in this narrative, that if the reader is naturally candid he will not be disgusted; if he is easily amused he will not be disappointed.

As I have been, through life, a negligent recorder of dates and events relating to myself, it is very possible I may fall into errors of memory as to the order and arrangement of certain facts and occurrences, but whilst I adhere to veracity in the relation of them, the trespass, I presume, will be readily overlooked.

Of many persons, with whom I have had intercourse and connexion, I shall speak freely and impartially. I know myself incapable of wantonly aspersing the characters of the living or the dead; but, though I will not indulge myself in conjectures, I will not turn aside from facts, and neither from affectation of candour, nor dread of recrimination, waive the privilege, which I claim for myself in every page of this history, of speaking the truth from my heart: I may not always say all that I could, but I will never knowingly say of any man what I should not.

As I am descended from ancestors illustrious for their piety, benevolence and erudition, I

will not say I am not vain of that distinction; but I will confess it would be a vanity, serving only to expose my degeneracy, were it accompanied with the inspiration of no worthier passion.

Doctor Richard Cumberland, who was consecrated bishop of Peterborough in the year 1691, was my great grandfather. He was author of that excellent work entitled *De legibus Naturæ*, in which he effectually refutes the impious tenets of Hobbes, and whilst he was unambitiously fulfilling the simple functions of a parish priest in the town of Stamford, the revolution having taken place, search was made after the ablest protestant divines to fill up vacancies in the hierarchy, and rally round their late endangered church.—Without interest, and without a wish to emerge from his obscurity and retirement, this excellent man, the vindicator of the insulted laws of nature, received the first intelligence of his promotion from a paragraph in the public papers, and, being then sixty years old, was with difficulty persuaded to accept the offer, when it came to him from authority. The persuasion of his friends, particularly Sir Orlando Bridgeman,

at length overcame his repugnance, and to that See, though very moderately endowed, he for ever after devoted himself, and resisted every offer of translation, though repeatedly made and earnestly recommended. To such of his friends as pressed an exchange upon him he was accustomed to reply, that Peterborough was his first espoused, and should be his only one; and, in fact, according to his principles, no church revenue could enrich him; for I have heard my father say, that, at the end of every year, whatever overplus he found upon a minute inspection of his accounts was by him distributed to the poor, reserving only one small deposit of twenty-five pounds in cash, found at his death in his bureau, with directions to employ it for the discharge of his funeral expences; a sum, in his modest calculation, fully sufficient to commit his body to the earth.

Such was the humility of this truly christian prelate, and such his disinterested sentiments as to the appropriation of his episcopal revenue. The wealthiest See could not have tempted him to accumulate, the poorest sufficed for his expences, and of those he had to spare for the

poor. Yet he was hospitable in his plain and primitive style of living, and had a table ever open to his clergy and his friends: he had a sweetness and placidity of temper, that nothing ever ruffled or disturbed. I know it cannot be the lot of human creature to attain perfection, yet so wonderfully near did this good man approach to consummate rectitude, that unless benevolence may be carried to excess, no other failing was ever known to have been discovered in his character. His chaplain, Archdeacon Payne, who married one of his daughters, and whom I am old enough to remember, makes this observation in the short sketch of the bishop's life, which he has prefixed to his edition of *The Sanchoniatho*. This and his other works are in the hands of the learned, and cannot need any effort on my part to elucidate what they so clearly display, the vast erudition and patient investigation of their author.

The death of this venerable prelate was, like his life, serene and undisturbed: at the extended age of eighty-six years and some months, as he was sitting in his library, he ex-

pired without a struggle, for he was found in the attitude of one asleep, with his cap fallen over his eyes, and a book in his hand, in which he had been reading. Thus, without the ordinary visitations of pain or sickness, it pleased God to terminate the existence of this exemplary man.

He possessed his faculties to the last, verifying the only claim he was ever heard to make as to mental endowments; for whilst he acknowledged himself to be gifted by nature with *good wearing parts*, he made no pretensions to quick and brilliant talents, and in that respect he seems to have estimated himself very truly, as we rarely find such meek and modest qualities as he possessed in men of warmer imaginations, and a brighter glow of genius with less solidity of understanding, and, of course, more liable to the influences of their passions.

Bishop Cumberland was the son of a respectable citizen of London, and educated at St. Paul's school, from whence he was admitted of Magdalen College in Cambridge, where he pursued his studies, and was elected fellow of that society, to which I had the honour to

present a copy of that portrait from which the print hereunto annexed was taken.

In the oriental languages, in mathematics, and even in anatomy, he was deeply learned; in short, his mind was fitted for elaborate and profound researches, as his works more fully testify. It is to be lamented that his famous work, *de legibus Naturæ*, was allowed to come before the public with so many and such glaring errors of the press, which his absence and considerable distance from London disabled him from correcting. I had a copy interleaved and corrected and amended throughout by Doctor Bentley, who, being on a visit to my father at his parsonage-house in Northamptonshire, undertook that kind office, and completed it most effectually. This book I gave, when last at Cambridge, to the library of Trinity College; and if, by those means, it shall find a passport to the University press, I shall have cause to congratulate myself for having so happily bestowed it.

Of Doctor Richard Bentley, my maternal grandfather, I shall next take leave to speak. Of him I have perfect recollection. His person, his dignity, his language and his love

fixed my early attention, and stamped both his image and his words upon my memory. His literary works are known to all, his private character is still misunderstood by many; to that I shall confine myself, and, putting aside the enthusiasm of a descendant, I can assert, with the veracity of a biographer, that he was neither cynical, as some have represented him, nor overbearing and fastidious in the degree, as he has been described by many. Swift, when he foisted him into his vulgar *Battle of the Books*, neither lowers Bentley's fame nor elevates his own; and the petulant poet, who thought he had hit his manner, when he made him haughtily call to *Walker* for his *hat*, gave a copy as little like the character of Bentley, as his translation is like the original of Homer. That Doctor Walker, vice-master of Trinity-College, was the friend of my grandfather, and a frequent guest at his table, is true; but it was not in Doctor Bentley's nature to treat him with contempt, nor did his harmless character inspire it. As for the *hat*, I must acknowledge it was of formidable dimensions, yet I was accustomed to treat it with great familiarity, and if it had ever been further from the

hand of its owner than the peg upon the back of his great arm-chair, I might have been dispatched to fetch it, for he was disabled by the palsy in his latter days; but the hat never strayed from its place, and Pope found an office for Walker, that I can well believe he was never commissioned to in his life.

I had a sister somewhat elder than myself. Had there been any of that sternness in my grandfather, which is so falsely imputed to him, it may well be supposed we should have been awed into silence in his presence, to which we were admitted every day. Nothing can be further from the truth; he was the unwearied patron and promoter of all our childish sports and sallies; at all times ready to detach himself from any topic of conversation to take an interest and bear his part in our amusements. The eager curiosity natural to our age, and the questions it gave birth to, so teazing to many parents, he, on the contrary, attended to and encouraged, as the claims of infant reason never to be evaded or abused; strongly recommending, that to all such enquiries answer should be given according to the strictest

truth, and information dealt to us in the clear est terms, as a sacred duty never to be depar ed from. I have broken in upon him many a time in his hours of study, when he would put his book aside, ring his hand-bell for his servant, and be led to his shelves to take down a picture-book for my amusement. I do not say that his good-nature always gained its object, as the pictures which his books generally supplied me with were anatomical drawings of dissected bodies, very little calculated to communicate delight; but he had nothing better to produce; and surely such an effort on his part, however unsuccessful, was no feature of a cynic: a cynic *should be made of sterner stuff.* I have had from him, at times, whilst standing at his elbow, a complete and entertaining narrative of his school-boy days, with the characters of his different masters very humorously displayed, and the punishments described, which they at times would wrongfully inflict upon him for seeming to be idle and regardless of his task, "When the dunces," he would say, "could not discover that I "was pondering it in my mind, and fixing it

"more firmly in my memory, than if I had "been bawling it out amongst the rest of my "school-fellows."

Once, and only once, I recollect his giving me a gentle rebuke for making a most outrageous noise in the room over his library and disturbing him in his studies; I had no apprehension of anger from him, and confidently answered that I could not help it, as I had been at battledore and shuttlecock with Master Gooch, the Bishop of Ely's son. "And I "have been at this sport with his father," he replied; "but thine has been the more amu- "sing game; so there's no harm done."

These are puerile anecdotes, but my history itself is only in its nonage; and even these will serve in some degree to establish what I affirmed, and present his character in those mild and unimposing lights, which may prevail with those who know him only as a critic and controversialist—

As slashing Bentley with his desperate hook,

to reform and soften their opinions of him.

He recommended it as a very essential duty in parents to be particularly attentive to the

first dawnings of reason in their children; and his own practice was the best illustration of his doctrine; for he was the most patient hearer and most favorable interpreter of first attempts at argument and meaning that I ever knew. When I was rallied by my mother, for roundly asserting that I *never slept*, I remember full well his calling on me to account for it; and when I explained it by saying I never knew myself to be asleep, and therefore supposed I never slept at all, he gave me credit for my defence, and said to my mother, "Leave "your boy in possession of his opinion; he "has as clear a conception of sleep, and at least "as comfortable an one, as the philosophers "who puzzle their brains about it, and do not "rest so well."

Though Bishop Lowth, in the flippancy of controversy called the author of *The Philoleutherus Lipsiensis* and detector of Phalaris *aut Caprimulgus aut fossor*, his genius has produced those living witnesses, that must for ever put that charge to shame and silence.—Against such idle ill-considered words, now dead as the language they were conveyed in, the appeal is near at hand; it lies no further

off than to his works, and they are upon every reading-man's shelves; but those, who would have looked into his heart, should have stepped into his house, and seen him in his private and domestic hours; therefore it is that I adduce these little anecdotes and trifling incidents, which describe the man, but leave the author to defend himself.

His ordinary style of conversation was naturally lofty, and his frequent use of *thou* and *thee* with his familiars carried with it a kind of dictatorial tone, that savoured more of the closet than the court; this is readily admitted, and this on first approaches might mislead a stranger; but the native candour and inherent tenderness of his heart could not long be veiled from observation, for his feelings and affections were at once too impulsive to be long repressed, and he too careless of concealment to attempt at qualifying them. Such was his sensibility towards human sufferings, that it became a duty with his family to divert the conversation from all topics of that sort; and if he touched upon them himself he was betrayed into agitations, which if the reader ascribes to paralytic weakness, he will very great-

ly mistake a man, who to the last hour of his life possessed his faculties firm and in their fullest vigour; I therefore bar all such misinterpretations as may attempt to set the mark of infirmity upon those emotions, which had no other source and origin but in the natural and pure benevolence of his heart.

He was communicative to all without distinction, that sought information, or resorted to him for assistance; fond of his college almost to enthusiasm, and ever zealous for the honour of the purple gown of Trinity. When he held examinations for fellowships, and the modest candidate exhibited marks of agitation and alarm, he never failed to interpret candidly of such symptoms; and on those occasions he was never known to press the hesitating and embarrassed examinant, but oftentimes on the contrary would take all the pains of expounding on himself, and credit the exonerated candidate for answers and interpretations of his own suggesting. If this was not rigid justice, it was, at least in my conception of it, something better and more amiable; and how liable he was to deviate from the strict line of justice, by his partiality to the side of mercy, appears

from the anecdote of the thief, who robbed him of his plate, and was seized and brought before him with the very articles upon him: the natural process in this man's case pointed out the road to prison; my grandfather's process was more summary, but not quite so legal. While Commissary Greaves, who was then present, and of counsel for the college *Ex officio*, was expatiating on the crime, and prescribing the measures obviously to be taken with the offender, Doctor Bentley interposed, saying, "Why tell the man he is a thief? he "knows that well enough, without thy infor- "mation, Greaves.—Harkye, fellow, thou see'st "the trade which thou hast taken up is an un- "profitable trade, therefore get thee gone, lay "aside an occupation by which thou can'st "gain nothing but a halter, and follow that "by which thou may'st earn an honest liveli- "hood." Having said this, he ordered him to be set at liberty against the remonstrances of the bye-standers, and insisting upon it that the fellow was duly penitent for his offence, bade him go his way and never steal again.

I leave it with those, who consider mercy as one of man's best attributes, to suggest a plea

for the informality of this proceeding, and to such I will communicate one other anecdote, which I do not deliver upon my own knowledge, though from unexceptionable authority, and this is, that when *Collins* had fallen into decay of circumstances, Doctor Bentley, suspecting he had written him out of credit by his *Philoleutherus Lipsiensis*, secretly contrived to administer to the necessities of his baffled opponent in a manner, that did no less credit to his delicacy than to his liberality.

A morose and over-bearing man will find himself a solitary being in creation; Doctor Bentley on the contrary had many intimates; judicious in forming his friendships, he was faithful in adhering to them. With Sir Isaac Newton, Doctor Mead, Doctor Wallis of Stamford, Baron Spanheim, the lamented Roger Cotes, and several other distinguished and illustrious contemporaries, he lived on terms of uninterrupted harmony, and I have good authority for saying, that it is to his interest and importunity with Sir Isaac Newton, that the inestimable publication of the *Principia* was ever resolved upon by that truly great and luminous philosopher. Newton's portrait by Sir

James Thornhill, and those of Baron Spanheim and my grandfather by the same hand, now hanging in the Master's lodge of Trinity, were the bequest of Doctor Bentley. I was possessed of letters in Sir Isaac's own hand to my grandfather, which together with the corrected volume of Bishop Cumberland's *Laws of Nature*, I lately gave to the library of that flourishing and illustrious college.

The irreparable loss of Roger Cotes in early life, of whom Newton had pronounced—*Now the world will know something*, Doctor Bentley never mentioned but with the deepest regret; he had formed the highest expectations of new lights and discoveries in philosophy from the penetrating force of his extraordinary genius, and on the tablet devoted to his memory in the chapel of Trinity College Doctor Bentley has recorded his sorrows and those of the whole learned world in the following beautiful and pathetic epitaph:

H. S. E.

"Rogerus Roberti filius Cotes,
"Hujus Collegii S. Trinitatis Socius,
"Et Astronomiæ et experimentalis
"Philosophiæ Professor Plumianus;

" Qui immatura Morte præreptus,
" Pauca quidem ingenii Sui
" Pignora reliquit,
" Sed egregia, sed admirandâ,
" Ex intimis Matheseôs penetralibus,
" Felici Solertiâ tum primum eruta;
" Post magnum illum Newtonum
" Societatis hujus spes altera
" Et decus gemellum;
" Cui ad summam Doctrinæ laudem,
" Omnes morum virtutumque dotes
" In cumulum accesserunt;
" Eo magis spectabiles amabilesque,
" Quod in formoso corpore
" Gratiores venirent.
" Natus Burbagii
" In agro Leicestriensi.
" Jul. x. MDCLXXXII.
" Obiit. Jun. v. MDCCXVI."

His domestic habits, when I knew him, were still those of unabated study; he slept in the room adjoining to his library, and was never with his family till the hour of dinner; at these times he seemed to have detached himself most completely from his studies; never appearing thoughtful and abstracted, but social, gay, and

possessing perfect serenity of mind and equability of temper. He never dictated topics of conversation to the company he was with, but took them up as they came in his way, and was a patient listener to other people's discourse, however trivial or uninteresting it might be. When *The Spectators* were in publication I have heard my mother say he took great delight in hearing them read to him, and was so particularly amused by the character of Sir Roger de Coverley, that he took his literary decease most seriously to heart. She also told me, that, when in conversation with him on the subject of his works, she found occasion to lament that he had bestowed so great a portion of his time and talents upon criticism instead of employing them upon original composition, he acknowledged the justice of her regret with extreme sensibility, and remained for a considerable time thoughtful and seemingly embarrassed by the nature of her remark; at last recollecting himself he said—"Child, I "am sensible I have not always turned my "talents to the proper use for which I should "presume they were given to me: yet I have "done something for the honour of my God

"and the edification of my fellow creatures;
"but the wit and genius of those old heathens
"beguiled me, and as I despaired of raising
"myself up to their standard upon fair ground,
"I thought the only chance I had of looking
"over their heads was to get upon their shoul-
"ders."

Of his pecuniary affairs he took no account; he had no use for money, and dismissed it entirely from his thoughts: his establishment in the mean time was respectable, and his table affluently and hospitably served. All these matters were conducted and arranged in the best manner possible by one of the best women living; for such, by the testimony of all who knew her, was Mrs. Bentley, daughter of Sir John Bernard of Brampton in Huntingdonshire, a family of great opulence and respectability, allied to the Cromwells and Saint Johns, and by intermarriages connected with other great and noble houses. I have perfect recollection of the person of my grandmother, and a full impression of her manners and habits, which, though in some degree tinctured with hereditary reserve and the primitive cast of character, were entirely free from the hypo-

critical cant and affected sanctity of the Oliverians. Her whole life was modelled on the purest principles of piety, benevolence and christian charity; and in her dying moments, my mother being present and voucher of the fact, she breathed out her soul in a kind of beatific vision, exclaiming in rapture as she expired—*It is all bright, it is all glorious!*

I was frequently called upon by her to repeat certain scriptural texts and passages, which she had taught me, and for which I seldom failed to be rewarded, but by which I was also frequently most completely puzzled and bewildered; so that I much doubt if the good effects of this practice upon immature and infantine understandings will be found to keep pace with the good intentions of those who adopt it. One of these holy apothegms, viz. —*The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good,* I remember to have cost me many a struggle to interpret, and the result of my construction was directly opposite to the spirit and meaning of the text.— I was also occasionally summoned to attend upon the readings of long sermons and homilies of Baxter, as I believe, and others of his

period; neither by these was I edified, but, on the contrary, so effectually wearied, that by noises and interruptions I seldom failed to render myself obnoxious, and obtain my dismission before the reading was over.

The death of this exemplary lady preceded that of my grandfather by a few years only, and by her he had one son, Richard, and two daughters, Elizabeth and Joanna. Richard was a man of various and considerable accomplishments; he had a fine genius, great wit and a brilliant imagination; he had also the manners and address of a perfect gentleman, but there was a certain eccentricity and want of worldly prudence in my uncle's character, that involved him in distresses, and reduced him to situations uncongenial with his feelings, and unpropitious to the cultivation and encouragement of his talents. His connexion with Mr. Horace Walpole, the late Lord Orford, had too much of the bitter of dependance in it to be gratifying to the taste of a man of his spirit and sensibility; the one could not be abject, and the other, I suspect, was not by nature very liberal and large-minded. They carried on, for a long time, a sickly kind of friendship,

which had its hot fits and its cold; was suspended and renewed, but I believe never totally broken and avowedly laid aside. Walpole had by nature a propensity, and by constitution a plea, for being captious and querulential, for he was a martyr to the gout. He wrote prose and published it; he composed verses and circulated them, and was an author, who seemed to play at *hide-and-seek* with the public.—There was a mysterious air of consequence in his private establishment of a domestic printing press, that seemed to augur great things, but performed little. Walpole was already an author with no great claims to excellence, Bentley had those powers in embryo, that would have enabled him to excel, but submitted to be the projector of Gothic embellishments for Strawberry Hill, and humble designer of drawings to ornament a thin folio of a meagre collection of odes by Gray, the most costive of poets, edited at the Walpolian press. In one of these designs Bentley has personified himself as a monkey, sitting under a withered tree with his pallet in his hand, while Gray reposes under the shade of a flourishing laurel in all the dignity of learned ease. Such a design with fi-

gures so contrasted might flatter Gray and gratify the trivial taste of Walpole; but in my poor opinion it is a satire in copper plate, and my uncle has most completely libelled both his poet and his patron without intending so to do.

Let this suffice at present for the son of Doctor Bentley; in the course of these memoirs I shall take occasion to recall the attention of my readers to what I have further to relate of him.

Elizabeth Bentley, eldest daughter of her father, first married Humphry Ridge Esquire, and after his decease the Reverend Doctor Favell, fellow of Trinity College, and after his marriage with my aunt, Rector of Witton near Huntingdon, in the gift of Sir John Bernard of Brampton. She was an honourable and excellent lady; I had cause to love her, and lament her death. She inherited the virtues and benignity of her mother, with habits more adapted to the fashions of the world.

Joanna, the younger of Dr. Bentley's daughters, and the Phœbe of Byron's pastoral, was my mother. I will not violate the allegiance I have vowed to truth in giving any other

charâcter of her, than what in conscience I regard as just and faithful. She had a vivacity of fancy and a strength of intellect, in which few were her superiors: she read much, remembered well and discerned acutely: I never knew the person, who could better embellish any subject she was upon, or render common incidents more entertaining by the happy art of relating them; her invention was so fertile, her ideas so original and the points of humour so ingeniously and unexpectedly taken up in the progress of her narrative, that she never failed to accomplish all the purposes, which the gaiety of her imagination could lay itself out for: she had a quick intuition into characters, and a faculty of marking out the ridiculous, when it came within her view, which of force I must confess she made rather too frequent use of. Her social powers were brilliant, but not uniform, for on some occasions she would persist in a determined taciturnity to the regret of the company present, and at other times would lead off in her best manner, when perhaps none were present, who could taste the spirit and amenity of her humour. There hardly passed a day, in which she failed

to devote a portion of her time to the reading of the Bible; and her comments and expositions might have merited the attention of the wise and learned. Though strictly pious, there was no gloom in her religion, but on the contrary such was the happy faculty, which she possessed, of making every doctrine pleasant, every duty sweet, that what some instructors would have represented as a burden and a yoke, she contrived to recommend as a recreation and delight. All that son can owe to parent, or disciple to his teacher, I owe to her.

My paternal grandfather Richard, only son of Bishop Cumberland, was rector of Peakirk in the diocese of Peterborough and Archdeacon of Northampton. He had two sons and one daughter, who was married to Waring Ashby Esquire of Quenby Hall in the county of Leicester, and died in child-birth of her only son George Ashby Esquire, late of Haselbeach in Northamptonshire. Richard, the eldest son of Archdeacon Cumberland, died unmarried at the age of twenty-nine, and the younger, Denison, so named from his mother, was my father. He was educated at Westminster school, and from that admitted fel-

low-commoner of Trinity College in Cambridge. He married at the age of twenty-two, and though in possession of an independent fortune was readily prevailed upon by his father-in-law Doctor Bentley to take the rectory of Stanwick in the county of Northampton, given to him by Lord Chancellor King, as soon as he was of age to hold it. From this period he fixed his constant residence in that retired and tranquil spot, and sedulously devoted himself to the duties of his function. When I contemplate the character of this amiable man, I declare to truth I never yet knew one so happily endowed with those engaging qualities, which are formed to attract and fix the love and esteem of mankind. It seemed as if the whole spirit of his grandfather's benevolence had been transfused into his heart, and that he bore as perfect a resemblance of him in goodness, as he did in person: in moral purity he was truly a Christian, in generosity and honour he was perfectly a gentleman.

On the nineteenth day of February 1732 I was born in the Master's Lodge of Trinity College, *inter silvas Academi*, under the roof of my grand-father Bentley, in what is

called *the Judge's Chamber.* Having therefore prefaced my history with these few faint sketches of the great and good men, whom I have the honour to number amongst my ancestors, I must solicit the condescension of my readers to a much humbler topic, and proceed to speak professedly of myself.

Here then for awhile I pause for self-examination, and to weigh the task I am about to undertake. I look into my heart; I search my understanding; I review my life, my labours, the talents I have been endowed with, and the uses I have put them to, and it shall be my serious study not to be found guilty of any partial estimates, any false appretiation of that self, either as author or man, which of necessity must be made to fill so large a portion of the following pages. When from the date, at which my history now pauses, I look forward through a period of more than seventy and two years, I discover nothing within my horizon, of which to be vain-glorious; no sudden heights to turn me giddy, no dazzling gleams of Fortune's sunshine to bewilder me; nothing but one long laborious track, not often strewed with roses, and thorny, cold and

barren towards the conclusion of it, where weariness wants repose, and age has need of comfort. I see myself unfortunately cast upon a lot in life neither congenial with my character, nor friendly to my peace; combating with dependence, disappointment and disgusts of various sorts, transplanted from a college, within whose walls I had devoted myself to studies, which I pursued with ardent passion and a rising reputation, and what to obtain? What, but the experience of difficulties, and the credit of overcoming them; the useful chastisement, which unkindness has inflicted, and the conscious satisfaction of not having merited, nor in any instance of my life revenged it?

If I do not know myself I am not fit to be my own biographer; and if I do know myself I am sure I never took delight in egotisms, and now behold! I am self-devoted to deal in little else. Be it so! I will abide the consequences; I will not tell untruths to set myself out for better than I have been, but as I have not been overpaid by my contemporaries, I will not scruple to exact what is due

to me from posterity.—*Ipse de me scribam. (Cic.)*

I have said that I was born on the 19th of February 1732; I was not the eldest child, though the only son, of my mother; my sister Joanna was more than two years older than me, and more than twice two years before me in apprehension, for whilst she profited very rapidly by her mother's teaching, I by no means trode in her steps, but on the contrary after a few unpromising efforts peremptorily gave up the cause, and persisted in a stubborn repugnance to all instruction. My mother's good sense and my grandfather's good advice concurred in the measures to be taken with me in this state of mutiny against all the powers of the alphabet; my book was put before me, my lesson pointed out, and though I never articulated a single word, I conned it over in silence to myself. I have traces of my sensations at this period still in my mind, and perfectly recollect the revolt I received from reading of the Heathen Idols, described in the 115th psalm as having eyes and not seeing, ears and not hearing, with other contrarieties, which between positive and negative so con-

pletely overset my small stock of ideas, that I obstinately stood fast upon the halt, dumb and insensible to instruction as the images in question. Of this circumstance, exactly as I relate it, with those sensations which it impressed upon my infantine mind, I now retain, as I have already said, distinct recollection.

If there is any moral in this small incident, which can impart a cautionary hint to the teachers of children, my readers will forgive me for treating them with a story of the nursery. I have only to add, that when I at length took to my business, I have my mother's testimony for saying that I repaid her patience.

My family divided their time between Cambridge and Stanwick so long as my grandfather lived, and when I was turned of six years I was sent to the school at Bury St. Edmund's, then under the mastership of the Reverend Arthur Kinsman, who formed his scholars upon the system of Westminster, and was a Trinity College man, much esteemed by my grandfather. This school, when I came to it, was in high reputation, and numbered a hundred and fifty boys. Kinsman was an excellent master, a very sufficient scholar, and had all the pro-

fessional requisites of voice, air and aspect, that marked him out at first sight as a personage decidedly made on purpose—*habere imperium in pueros.* In his hands I can truly witness the reins of empire never slackened, but we did not murmur against his authority, for with all his warmth of temper he was kind, cordial, open-hearted and an impartial administrator of punishments and praises, as they were respectively deserved. His name was high in the counties of Suffolk and Norfolk, and the chief families in those parts were present with him in the persons of their representatives, and some yet living can bear witness to the vigour of his arm. He was fiery zealous for the honour of his school, which by the terms of its establishment was subject to the visitation of those, who were in the government of it, and I remember upon a certain occasion, when these gentlemen entered the school-room, in the execution of their office, (I being then in the rostrum in the act of construing Juvenal) he ordered me to proceed without noticing their appearance, and something having passed to give him offence against one of their number in particular, taking up the passage then under

immediate recitation, he echoed forth in a loud and pointed tone of voice—

——*Nos, nostraque lividus odit.*

It must be confessed that my good old master had a vaunting kind of style in setting forth his school, and once in conversation with my grandfather in Trinity Lodge, he was so unaccountably misled by the spirit of false prophecy, as to venture to say in a raillying kind of way—"Master, I will make your "grandson as good a scholar as yourself."—To this Doctor Bentley in the like vein of raillery replied—"Pshaw, Arthur, how can that "be, when I have forgot more than thou ever "knew'st?" Certain it is that my inauspicious beginnings augured very ill for the bold prediction, thus improvidently hazarded; for so supremely idle was I, and so far from being animated by the charms of the Latin grammar, that the labour of instruction was but labour lost, and it seemed a chance if I was destined to arrive at any other acquirement but *the art of sinking*, in which I regularly proceeded till I found my proper station at the very bottom of my class, which, as far as idleness could be

my security, I was likely to take lasting possession of.

I am persuaded however that the tranquillity of my ignorance would have suffered no interruption from the remonstrances of the worthy usher of the under-school, who sate in a plaid night gown and let things take their course, had not the penetrating eye of old Kinsman discovered the grandson of his friend far in the rear of the line of honour, and in a fair train to give the flattest contradiction to his prophecy. Whereupon one day, which by me can never be forgotten, calling me up to him in his chair at the head of the school, he began with much solemnity and in a loud voice to lecture me very sharply, whilst all eyes were upon me, all ears open, and a dead silence, horrible to my feelings, did not leave a hope that a single word had escaped the notice of my schoolfellows. I well remember his demanding of me what report I could expect him to make of me to my grandfather Bentley. I shuddered at the name, even at that early age so loved and so revered: I made no defence; I had none to make, and he went thundering on, farther perhaps than he need to have gone, had he

given less scope to his zeal, and trusted more to his intuition, for the keenness of his reproof had sunk into my heart; I was covered with shame and confusion; I retired abashed to my seat, which was the lowest in my class, and that class the lowest save one in the under-school: I hid my face between my hands, resting my head upon the desk before me, and gave myself even to tears and contrition: When I raised my head I would look about me, I thought I discovered a gratified air in the countenances of the boys. At that moment the spirit of emulation, which had not yet awaked in my heart, was thoroughly roused; but whilst I was thus resolving on a reform I fell ill, whether from agitation of mind, or from cause more natural I know not: I was however laid up in a sick bed for a considerable time, and in that piteous situation visited by my mother, who came from Cambridge on the alarm, and under her tender care I at length regained both my spirits and my health.

My mother now returned to Cambridge and I was taken into Kinsman's own house as a boarder, where being associated with boys of a better description, and more immediately un-

der the eye of my most timely admonisher, I took all the pains that my years would admit of to deserve his better opinion and regain my lost ground. My diligence was soon followed by success, and success encouraged me to fresh exertions.

I presume the teachers of grammar do not expect boys of a very early age to understand it as a body of rules, but merciend tou exercise of memory; yet it is well to i. a fait it on their memories, that that may m his readily apply to it as they advance in their acquaintance with the language. I had naturally a good memory, and practice added such a facility of getting by heart, that in my repetitions, when we challenged for places, I entered the lists with all possible advantages, and soon found myself able to break a lance with the very best of my competitors. The good man in the plaid gown now began to regard me with less than his usual indifference, and my early star was evidently in the ascendant. Such were to me the happy consequences of my worthy master's reasonable admonition.

After the decease of Mrs. Bentley, my mother, whose devotion to her father was return-

ed by the warmest affection on his part, passed much of her time, as my father did of his, at Cambridge; there I also passed my holidays, and the undescribable gratification those delightful seasons gave me, hath left traces of the times long past and the persons now dead, that can only be effaced by death, and of their surviving even *that* I should be loth to lose the hope. I was become capable of understanding my grandfather to be the great man he really was, and began to listen to him with attention, and treasure up his sayings in my mind. I was admitted to dine at his table, had my seat next to his chair, served him in many little offices and went upon his errands with a promptitude and alacrity, that shewed what pride I took in such commissions, and tempted his good nature to invent occasions for employing me.

One day I full well remember my old master Kinsman walked into the room, and was welcomed by my grandfather with the cordiality natural to him. In the mean time my heart fluttered with alarm and dread of that report, which he had once threatened to prefer against me: nothing could be further from his

generous thoughts, and as soon as ever he was at leisure to notice such an insignificant little being, it was with the affection and caresses of a father; when I looked in his face there was no longer any feature of the schoolmaster in it, the terrors of the ferula and the rod were vanished out of sight, and that upright strutting little person, which in authority was so awful, had now relaxed from its rigidity, and no longer strove to swell itself into importance. Arthur notwithstanding was a great man on his own ground, and though he venerated the master of Trinity College, he did not renounce a proper self esteem for the master of Bury School, and the dignity appertaining to that office, which he filled, and to which Bentley himself had once stooped for instruction. He was a gay social fellow, who loved his friend and had no antipathy to his bottle; he had then a kind of dashing discourse, savouring somewhat of *the shop*, which trifles did not check and contradiction could not daunt.—He had at this very time been recreating his spirit with the company in the combination room, and was fairly primed with priestly port. My grandfather I dare say discovered nothing

of this, and Walker, who accompanied Kinsman to the lodge, was exactly in that state when silence is the best resort: Arthur in the mean time, whose tongue conviviality had by no means tied up, began to open his school books upon Bentley, and had drawn him into Homer; Greek now rolled in torrents from the lips of Bentley, and the most learned of moderns chanted forth the inspired rhapsodies of the most illustrious of antients in a strain delectable indeed to the ear, but not very edifying to poor little me and the ladies; nay, I should even doubt if the master of Bury School understood all that he heard, but that the worthy vice master of Trinity was innocent of all apprehension, and clear of the plot, if treason was wrapped up in it, I can upon my knowledge of him confidently vouch. This however I remember, and my mother has frequently in time past refreshed my recollection of it, that Joshua Barnes in the course of this conversation being quoted by Kinsman as a man understanding Greek and speaking it almost like his mother tongue—"Yes," replied Bentley, "I do believe that Barnes had as much "Greek, and understood it about as well, as

an Athenian blacksmith." Of Pope's Homer he said that he had read it; it was an elegant poem, but no translation. Of the learned Warburton, then in the outset of his fame, he remarked that there seemed to be in him a voracious appetite for knowledge; he doubted if there was a good digestion. This is an anecdote I refer to those, who are competent to make or reject the application.

At no great distance of time from this period, which I have been now recording, Doctor Bentley died and was buried in Trinity College chapel by the side of the altar table, where a square black stone records his name, and nothing more. It remains with the munificence of that rich society to award him other monumental honors, whenever they may think it right to grace his memory with a tablet. He was seized with a complaint, that in his opinion seemed to indicate a necessity of immediate bleeding; Doctor Heberden, then a young physician practising in Cambridge, was of a contrary opinion, and the patient acquiesced. His friend Doctor Wallis, in whose skilful practice and experience he so justly placed his confidence, was unfortunately ab-

sent from Stamford, and never came upon the summons for any purpose but to share in the sorrows of his family, and lament the non-compliance with the process he had recommended, which, according to his judgment of the case, was the very measure he should himself have taken.

I believe I felt as much affliction as my age was capable of when my master Kinsman imparted the intelligence of my grandfather's death to me, taking me into his private chamber, and lamenting the event with great agitation. Whilst I gave vent to my tears, he pressed me tenderly in his arms, and encouraging me to persist in my diligence, assured me of his favour and protection. He kept me out of school for a few days, gave me private instruction, and then sent me forth ardently resolved to acquit myself to his satisfaction. From this time I may truly say my task was my delight. I rose rapidly to the head of my class, and in the whole course of my progress through the upper school never once lost my place of head boy, though daily challenged by those, who were as anxious to dislodge me

from my post as I was to maintain myself in it. As I have the honour to name both Bishop Warren and his brother Richard the physician as two amongst the most formidable of my form-fellows, I may venture to say that school boy must have been more than commonly alert, whom they could not overtake and depose; but the exertion of my competitors was such a spur to my industry and ambition, that my mind was perpetually in its business. Had I in any careless moment suffered a discomfiture, my mortification would have been most poignant, but the dread I had of that event caused me always to be prepared against it, and I held possession of my post under a suspended sword, that hourly menaced me without ever dropping.

Whilst I dwell on the detail of anecdotes like the above I must refer myself to the candour of the reader, but though it behoves me to study brevity, where I cannot furnish amusement, it would be totally inconsistent with the plan I have laid down to pass over in total silence this period of my life; an æra in the history of every man's mind and character, only

to be omitted when it is not to be obtained; a plea, which those, who are their own biographers, are not privileged to make.

My good old master was a hospitable man, and every Wednesday held a kind of public day, to which his friends and neighbours used to resort. On that day he drank his bottle of port and played his game of back-gammon, after which he came in gaiety of heart to evening-school for one hour only. It was a gala day for all the boys, and for me in particular, as I was sure on all those occasions to be ordered up to the rostrum to recite and expound Juvenal, and he seldom failed to keep me so employed through the whole time. He had a great partiality for that nervous author, and I remember his reciting the following passage in a kind of rapturous enthusiasm in the ears of all the school, crying out that he defied the writers of the Augustan age to produce one equal to it. ——The classical reader very probably will not second his opinion, but I dare say he will not fail to anticipate the passage, which is as follows—

Esto bonus miles, tutor bonus, arbiter idem
Integer; ambiguæ si quando citabere causæ,

Incertæque rei, Phalaris licet imperet ut sis
Falsus, et admoto dictet perjuria Tauro,
Summum crede nefas animam præferre pudori,
Et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.

This is unquestionably a fine passage and a sublime moral, but I rather suspect there is a quaintness, and something of what the Italians call *concetto*, in the concluding line, that is not quite in the style and cast of the purer age.

The tasks of a school-boy are of three descriptions; he is to give the construction of his author, to study his repetitions, and to write what are called his exercises, whether in verse or prose. In the former two, the tasks of construing and saying by heart, it was the usage of our school to challenge for places: In this province my good fortune was unclouded; in my exercises I did not succeed so well, for by aiming at something like fancy and invention I was too frequently betrayed into grammatical errors, whilst my rivals presented exercises with fewer faults, and, by attempting scarcely any thing, hazarded little. These premature and imperfect sallies, which I gave way to, did me no credit with my master, and once in particular upon my giving in a copy of Latin

verses, unpardonably incorrect, though not entirely void of imagination, he commented upon my blunders with great severity, and in the hearing of my form-fellows threatened to degrade me from my station at their head. I had earned that station by hard labour and unceasing assiduity; I had maintained it against their united efforts for some years, and the dread of being at once deprived of what they had not been able to take from me, had such an effect on my sensibility, that I never perfectly recovered it, and probably should at no time after have gained any credit in that branch of my school-business, had I not been transplanted to Westminster.

The exercise, for which I was reprehended, I well remember was a copy of verses upon Phalaris's bull, which bull I confess led me into some blunders, that my master might have observed upon with more temper. I stood in need of instruction, and he inflicted discouragement.

Though I love the memory of my good old master, and am under infinite obligations to his care and kindness, yet having severely experienced how poignant are the inflictions of

discouragement to the feelings, and how repulsive to the efforts of the unformed embryo genius, I cannot state this circumstance in any better light than as an oversight in point of education, which, though well-intentioned on his part, could only operate to destroy what it was his object to improve.

When the talents of a young and rising author shall be found to profit by the denunciations and brow-beatings of his hypercritical contemporaries, then, and not till then, it will be right to train up our children according to this system, and discouragement be the best model for education, which the conductors of it can adopt.

As our master had lately discontinued his custom of letting his boys act a play of Terence before the Christmas holidays, after the example of Westminster, some of us undertook without his leave, though probably not without his knowledge and connivance, to get up the tragedy of Cato at one of the boarding-houses, and invite the gentry of the town to be present at our childish exhibition. We escaped from school one evening, and climbed the wall that intercepted us from the scene of action, to

prepare ourselves for this goodly show. A full bottomed periwig for Cato, and female attire for Portia and Marcia borrowed from the maids of the lodging house were the chief articles of our scanty wardrobe, and of a piece with the wretchedness of our property was the wretchedness of our performance. Our audience however, which was not very select, endured us and we slept upon our laurels, till the next morning being made to turn out for the amusement of the whole school, and go through a scene or two of our evening's entertainment, we acquitted ourselves so little to the satisfaction of Mr. Kinsman, that after bestowing some hearty buffets upon the virtuous Marcia, who had *towered above her sex* in the person of a most ill-favoured wry-necked boy, the rest of our *dramatis personæ* were sentenced to the fine of an imposition, and dismissed. The part of Juba had been my cast, and the tenth satire of Juvenal was my portion of the fine inflicted.

It was about this time I made my first attempt in English verse, and took for my subject an excursion I had made with my family in the summer holidays to visit a relation in

Hampshire, which engaged me in a description of the docks at Portsmouth, and of the races at Winchester, where I had been present. I believe my poem was not short of a hundred lines, and was written at such times as I could snatch a few minutes from my business or amusements. I did not like to risk the consequences of confiding it to my school-fellows, but kept it closely secret till the next breaking up, when I exhibited it to my father, who received it after his gracious manner with unreserved commendation, and persisted in reciting it to his intimates, when I had gained experience enough to wish he had consigned it to oblivion.

Though I have no copy of this childish performance, I bear in my remembrance two introductory couplets, which were the first English lines I ever wrote, and are as follows—

Since every scribbler claims his share of fame,
And every Cibber boasts a Dryden's name,
Permit an infant Muse her chance to try;
All have a right to that, and why not I?

One other lame and miserable couplet just now occurs to me, as being quoted frequently upon me by my mother as an instance in the

art of sinking, and it is clear I had stumbled upon it in my description of the dock yard, viz.—

"Here they weave cables, there they main masts form,
"Here they forge anchors—useful in a storm."

My good father however was not to be put by from his defences by trifles, and stoutly stood by my anchors, contending that as they were unquestionably useful in a storm, I had said no more of them than was true, and why should I be ashamed of having spoken the truth? Yet ashamed I was some short time after, not indeed for having violated the truth, but for suppressing it, and my dilemma was occasioned by the following circumstance. I had picked up an epigram amongst my school fellows, which struck my fancy, and without naming the author, (for I knew him not,) I repeated it to my father—it was this—

Poets of old did Argus prize
Because he had an hundred eyes,
But sure more praise to him is due,
Who looks an hundred ways with two.

In repeating this epigram, which perhaps the reader can find an author for, I did not

give it out as my own, but it was so understood by my father, and he circulated it as mine, and took pleasure in repeating it as such amongst his friends and intimates. In this state of the mistake, when his credit had been affixed to it, I had not courage to disavow it, and the time being once gone by for saving my honor, I suffered him to persist in his error under the continual terror of detection. The dread of thus forfeiting his good opinion hung upon my spirits for a length of time; it passed however undiscovered to the end of his life, and I now implore pardon of his memory for the only fallacy I ever put upon him to the conviction of my conscience.

After the death of Doctor Bentley my family resided in the parsonage house of Stanwick near Higham Ferrers in Northamptonshire; it had been newly built from the ground by my father's predecessor Doctor Needham, from a plan of Mr. Burroughs of Caius College, an architect of no small reputation: it was a handsome square of four equal fronts, built of stone, containing four rooms on a floor with a gallery running through the centre; it was seated on the declivity of a gentle hill with the vil-

lage to the south amongst trees and pasture grounds in view, and a small stream in the valley between: on the north, west and south were gardens, on the east the church at some little distance, and in the intermediate space an excellent range of stables and coach houses, built by my father and forming one side of a square court laid out for the approach of carriages to the house. The spire of Stanwick church is esteemed one of the most beautiful models in that style of architecture in the kingdom; my father added a very handsome clock and ornamented the chancel with a railing, screen and entablature upon three-quarter columns with a singing gallery at the west end, and spared no expence to keep his church not only in that neatness and decorum, which befits the house of prayer, but also in a perfect state of good and permanent repair.

Here in the hearts of his parishioners, and the esteem of his neighbours, my good father lived tranquil and unambitious, never soliciting other preferment than this for the space of thirty years, holding only a small prebend in the church of Lincoln, given to him by his uncle Bishop Reynolds. He was in the com-

mission of the peace, and a very active magistrate in the reconcilement of parties rather than in the commitment of persons: in those quiet parts offences were in general trivial, and the differences merely such as an attorney could contrive to hook a suit upon, so that with a very little legal knowledge, and a very hospitable generous disposition, my father rarely failed to put contentious spirits to peace by reference to the kitchen and the cellar. In the mean time his popularity rose in proportion as his beer-barrels sunk, and as often as he made peace he made friends, till I may say without exaggeration he had all men's good word in his favour and their services at his command. In the mean time such was the orderly behaviour and good discipline of his own immediate flock, that I have frequently heard him say he never once had occasion during his long residence amongst them to issue his warrant within the precincts of his own happy village, which being seated between the more populous and less civilized parishes of Raunds and High-ham-Ferrers, he used appositely to call *Little Zoar*, but made no further allusions to the evil neighbourhood of *Zoar*.

In this peaceful spot with parents so affectionate I was the happiest of beings in my breakings-up from school. Those delightful scenes are fresh in my remembrance, and when I have occasionally revisited them, since the decease of objects ever so dear to me, the sensations they have excited are not for me to describe. I had inherited an excellent constitution, and, though not robust in make, was more than commonly adroit in my athletic exercises. In swiftness of foot for a short distance no boy in Bury School could match me, and, when at Cambridge, I gave a general challenge to the Collegians, which was decided in Trinity Walks in my favour.

Those field sports, of which the young and active are naturally so fond, I enjoyed by my father's favour in perfection, and in my winter holidays constantly went out with him upon his hunting days, and was always admirably mounted. He was light and elegant in his person, and had in his early youth kept horses and rode matches at Newmarket after the example of his elder brother; but though his profession had now put a stop to those levities, he shared in a pack of harriers with a neighbouring gen-

tleman, and was a bold and excellent rider. In my first attendances upon him to the field, the joys of hunting scarcely compensated for the terrors I sometimes felt in following him against my will upon a racing galloway, which he had purchased of old Panton, and whose attachment to her leader was such as left me no option as to the pace I would wish to go, or the leaps I would avoid to take. At length when age added strength and practice gave address, falls became familiar to me, and I left both fear and prudence behind me in the pleasures of the chace.

It was in these intervals from school that my mother began to form both my taste and my ear for poetry, by employing me every evening to read to her, of which art she was a very able mistress. Our readings were with very few exceptions confined to the chosen plays of Shakespear, whom she both admired and understood in the true spirit and sense of the author. Under her instruction I became passionately fond of these our evening entertainments; in the mean time she was attentive to model my recitation, and correct my manner with exact precision. Her comments and

illustrations were such aids and instructions to a pupil in poetry as few could have given. What I could not else have understood she could aptly explain, and what I ought to admire and feel nobody could more happily select and recommend. I well remember the care she took to mark out for my observation the peculiar excellence of that unrivalled poet in the consistency and preservation of his characters, and wherever instances occurred amongst the starts and sallies of his unfettered fancy of the extravagant and false sublime, her discernment oftentimes prevented me from being so dazzled by the glitter of the period as to misapply my admiration, and betray my want of taste. With all her father's critical *acumen* she could trace, and teach me to unravel, all the meanders of his metaphor, and point out where it illuminated, or where it only loaded and obscured the meaning; these were happy hours and interesting lectures to me, whilst my beloved father, ever placid and complacent, sate beside us, and took part in our amusement: his voice was never heard but in the tone of approbation; his countenance

never marked but with the natural traces of his indelible and hereditary benevolence.

The effect of these readings was exactly that, which was naturally to be foreseen. I began to try my strength in several slight attempts towards the drama, and as Shakespear was most upon my tongue and nearest to my heart, I fitted and compiled a kind of *cento*, which I intitled *Shakespear in the Shades*, and formed into one act, selecting the characters of Hamlet and Ophelia, Romeo and Juliet, Lear and Cordelia, as the persons of my drama, and giving to Shakespear, who is present throughout the piece, Ariel as an attendant spirit, and taking for the motto to my title page—

Ast alii sex,
Et plures, uno conclamant ore—

I should premise that I was now at the head of Bury School, though only in my twelfth year, and not very slightly grounded in the Greek and Latin classics, there taught.

The scene is laid in Elysium, where the poet is discovered and opens the drama with the following address—

"Most fair and equal hearers, know, that

"whilst this soul inhabited its fleshly taberna-
"cle, I was called Shakespear; a greater name
"and more exalted honours have dignified its
"dissolution. Blest with a liberal portion of
"the divine spirit, as a tribute due to the
"bounty of the Gods, I left behind me an im-
"mortal monument of my fame. Think not
"that I boast; the actions of departed beings
"may not be censured by any mortal wit, nor
"are accountable to any earthly tribunal. Let
"it suffice that in the grave—

When we have shuffled off this mortal coyle—

"All envy and detraction, all pride and vain-
"glory are no more; still a grateful remem-
"brance of humanity and a tender regard for
"our posterity on earth follow us to this hap-
"py seat; and it is in this regard I deign once
"more to salute you with my favoured pre-
"sence, and am content to be again an actor
"for your sakes. I have been attentive to
"your sufferings at my mournful scenes; guar-
"dian of that virtue, which I left in distress,
"I come now, the instrument of Providence,
"to compose your sorrows, and restore to it
"the proportioned reward. Those bleeding

"characters, those martyred worthies, whom "I have sent untimely to the shades, shall now "at length and in your sight be crowned with "their beloved retribution, and the justice, "which as their poet I with-held from them, "as the arbiter and disposer of their fate, I will "award to them; but for the villain and the "adulterer—

The perjured and the simular man of virtue—

"the proud, the ambitious, and the murderer "I shall—

Leave such to heaven,
And to those thorns, that in their bosoms lodge
To prick and sting them.—

"But soft! I see one coming, that often hath "beguiled you of your tears—the fair Ophe-"lia—"

The several parties now make their respective appeals, and Shakespear finally summons them all before him by his agent Ariel, for whose introduction he prepares the audience by the following soliloquy—

"Now comes the period of my high commission:
"All have been heard, and all shall be restor'd,
"All errors blotted out and all obstructions,

" Mortality entails, shall be remov'd,
" And from the mental eye the film withdrawn,
" Which in its corporal union had obscur'd
" And clouded the pure virtue of its sight.
" But to these purposes I must employ
" My ready spirit Ariel, some time minister
" To Prospero, and the obsequious slave
" Of his enchantments, from whose place preferr'd
" He here attends to do me services,
" And qualify these beings for Elysium—
" How! Ariel, approach, my dainty spirit!

(Ariel enters.)

All hail, great master, grave Sir, hail! I come
To answer thy best pleasure; be it to fly,
To swim, to dive into the fire, to ride
On the curled clouds—to thy strong bidding task
Ariel and all his qualities—

Shakespear.

" Know then, spirit,
" Into this grove six shades consign'd to bliss
" I've separately remov'd, of each sex three;
" Unheard of one another and unseen
" There they abide, yet each to each endear'd
" By ties of strong affection: not the same
" Their several objects, though the effects alike,
" But husband, father, lover make the change.
" Now though the body's perish'd, yet are they
" Fresh from their sins and bleeding with their wrongs;

"Therefore all sense of injury remove,
"Heal up their wounded faculties anew,
"And pluck affliction's arrow from their hearts;
"Refine their passions, for gross sensual love
"Let it become a pure and faultless friendship,
"Raise and confirm their joys, let them exchange
"Their fleeting pleasures for immortal peace:
"This done, with speed conduct them each to other
"So chang'd, and set the happy choir before me."

I have the whole of this puerile production written in a schoolboy's hand, which by some chance has escaped the general wreck, in which I have lost some records, that I should now be glad to resort to. I am not quite sure that I act fairly by my readers when I give any part of it a place in these memoirs, yet as an instance of the impression, which my mother's lectures had made upon my youthful fancy, and perhaps as a sample of composition indicative of more thought and contrivance, than are commonly to be found in boys at so very early an age, I shall proceed to transcribe the concluding part of the scene, in which Romeo has his audience, and can truly affirm that the copy is faithful without the alteration or addition of a single word—

Romeo.

"—Oh thou, the great disposer of my fate,
"Judge of my actions, patron of my cause,
"Tear not asunder such united hearts,
"But give me up to love and to my Juliet.

Shakespear.

"Unthinking youth, thou dost forget thyself;
"Rash inconsiderate boy, must I again
"Remind thee of thy fate? What! know'st thou not
"The man, whose desperate hand foredoes himself,
"Is doom'd to wander on the Stygian shore
"A restless shade, forlorn and comfortless,
"For a whole age? Nor shall he hope to sooth
"The callous ear of Charon, till he win
"His passion by repentance and submission
"At this my fixt tribunal, else be sure
"The wretch shall hourly pace the lazy wharf
"To view the beating of the Stygian wave,
"And waste his irksome leisure.

Romeo.

Gracious powers,
Is this my doom, my torment—? *Heaven is here*
Where Juliet lives, and each unworthy thing
Lives here in heaven and may look on her,
But Romeo may not: more validity,
More honourable state, more worship lives
In carrion flies than Romeo; they may seize

On the white wonder of my love's dear hand,
And steal immortal blessings from her lips,
But Romeo may not; "He is doom'd to bear
"An age's pain and sigh in banishment,
"To drag a restless being on the shore
"Of gloomy Styx, and weep into the flood,
"Till, with his tears made full, the briny stream"
Shall kiss the most exalted shores of all.

Shakespear.

"Now then dost thou repent thy follies past?

Romeo.

"Oh, ask me if I feel my torments present,
"Then judge if I repent my follies past.
"Had I but powers to tell you what I feel,
"A tongue to speak my heart's unfeign'd contrition,
"Then might I lay the bleeding part before you;
"But 'twill not be—something I yet would say
"To extenuate my crime; I fain would plead
"The merit of my love—but I have done—
"However hard my sentence, I submit.
"My faithless tongue turns traitor to my heart,
"And will not utter what it fondly prompts;
"A rising gust of passion drowns my voice,
"And I'm most dumb when I've most need to sue.

(Kneels.)

Shakespear.

"Arise, young Sir! before my mercy-seat
"None kneel in vain; repentance never lost

"The cause she pleaded. Mercy is the proof,
"The test that marks a character divine;
"Were ye like merciful to one another,
"The earth would be a heaven and men the gods.
"Withdraw awhile; I see thy heart is full;
"Grief at a crime committed merits more
"Than exultation for a duty done.

(Romeo withdraws.)

Shakespear remains and speaks—

"What rage is this, O man, that thou should'st dare
"To turn unnatural butcher on thyself,
"And thy presumptuous violent hand uplift
"Against that fabrick which the Gods have rais'd?
"Insolent wretch, did that presumptuous hand
"Temper thy woud'rous frame? Did that bold spirit
"Inspire the quicken'd clay with living breath?
"Do not deceive thyself. Have the kind Gods
"Lent their own goodly image to thy use
"For thee to break at pleasure?—
"What are thy merits? Where is thy dominion?
"If thou aspir'st to rule, rule thy desires.
"Thou poorly turn'st upon thy helpless body,
"And hast no heart to check thy growing sins:
"Thou gain'st a mighty victory o'er thy life,
"But art enslaved to thy basest passions,
"And bowest to the anarchy within thee.
"Oh! have a care
"Lest at thy great account thou should'st be found
"A thriftless steward of thy master's substance.

"'Tis his to take away, or sink at will,
"Thou but the tenant to a greater lord,
"Nor maker, nor the monarch of thyself."

I select these extracts, because what is within hooks is of my own composing, whereas in the preceding scenes, where the characters make their appeal, I perceive I had in general contrived to let them speak the language which their own poet had given to them. I presume to add that the passages I have extracted from their parts, as they stand in the originals of their great author, are ingeniously enough chosen and appositely introduced; I likewise take the liberty to observe, that where I have in those scenes above alluded to connected the extracts with my own dialogue, considering it as the work of so mere a novice, it is not contemptibly executed. As I have solemnly disavowed all deception or finesse in the whole conduct of these memoirs, so in this instance I have not sought to excite surprise by making my years fewer, or my verses better, than they strictly and truly were, having faithfully attested the one, and correctly transcribed the other.

My worthy old master at Bury, now in the

decline of life, intimated his purpose of retiring, and my father took the opportunity of transplanting me to Westminster, where he admitted me under Doctor Nichols, and lodged me in the boarding house, then kept by Ludford, where he himself had been placed. He took me in his hand to the master, who seemed a good deal surprised to hear that I had passed through Bury School at the age of twelve, and immediately put a Homer before me, and after that an ode in Horace. I turned my eyes on my father, and perceived him to be in considerable agitation. There happened to be no occasion for it, as the passages were familiar to me, and my amiable examiner seemed perfectly disposed to approve, cautioning me however not to read in too declamatory a style, "which," said he, "my boys will call con-"ceited." It was highly gratifying to me to hear him say, that he had found the boys, who came out of Mr. Kinsman's hands, generally better grounded in their business than those, who came from other schools. The next day he gave me a short examination for form-sake at the table, and placed me in the Shell. As I was then only twelve years old, and small in

stature for my years, my location in so high a class was regarded with some surprise by the corps, into which I was so unexpectedly enrolled. Doctor Johnson, afterwards Bishop of Worcester, was then second master; Vincent Bourne, well known to the literary world for his elegant Latin verses, was usher of the fifth form, and Lloyd, afterwards second master, was at the fourth. Cracherode, the learned collector and munificent benefactor to the Royal Museum, was in the head election, and at that time as grave, studious and reserved as he was through life; but correct in morals and elegant in manners, not courting a promiscuous acquaintance, but pleasant to those who knew him, beloved by many and esteemed by all. At the head of the town boys was the Earl of Huntingdon, whom I should not name as a boy, for he was even then the courtly and accomplished gentleman such as the world saw and acknowledged him to be. The late Earl of Bristol, the late Earl of Buckinghamshire, and the late Right Honorable Thomas Harley were my form-fellows, the present Duke of Richmond, then Lord March, Warren Hastings, Colman and Lloyd were in the under

school, and what is a very extraordinary coincidence, there were then in school together three boys, Hinchliffe, Smith and Vincent, who afterwards succeeded to be severally head masters of Westminster School and not by the decease of any one of them.

Hinchliffe might well be called the child of fortune, for he was born in penury and obscurity, and was lifted into opulence and high station, not by the elasticity of his own genius, but by that lucky combination of opportunities, which merit has no share in making, and modesty no aptitude to seize. At Trinity College I knew him as an under-graduate below my standing; in the revolution of a few years I saw him in the station, aforetime filled by my grandfather as master of the college, and holding with it the bishoprick of Peterborough; thus doubly dignified with those preferments, which had separately rewarded the learned labours of Cumberland and Bentley.

Smith laboured longer and succeeded less, yet he wisely chose his time for relaxation and retirement, whilst he was yet unexhausted by his toils, sufficiently affluent to enjoy his independance, and, with the consciousness of having

done his duty, to consult his ease, and to dismiss his cares.

Vincent, whom I love as a friend and honour as a scholar, has at length found that station in the deanery of Westminster, which, whilst it relieves him from the drudgery of the school-master, keeps him still attached to the interests of the school, and eminently concerned in the superintendance and protection of it. As boy and man he made his passage twice through the forms of Westminster, rising step by step from the very last boy to the very captain of the school, and again from the junior usher through every gradation to that of second and ultimately of senior master; thus, with the interval of four years only devoted to his degree at Cambridge, Westminster has indeed kept possession of his person, but has let the world partake with her in the profit of his researches. Without deserting the laborious post, to which his duty fettered him, his excursive genius led him over seas and countries far remote, to follow and develope tracts, redeem authorities and dig up evidences long buried in the grave of ages. This is the more to his honour as his hours of study were never

taken but from his hours of relaxation, and he stole no moment from the instruction of the boy to enrich the understanding of the man. His last work, small in bulk, but great in matter, was an unanswerable defence of public education, by which, with an acuteness that reflects credit on his genius, and a candour that does honour to his heart, he demonstrates the advantages of that system, which had so well prospered under his care, and generously forbears to avail himself of those arguments, which in a controversy with such an opponent some men would have resorted to. Let the mitred preacher against public schools rejoice in silence at his escape, but when the yet unmitred master of the Temple, indisputably one of the first scholars and finest writers of his time, leaves the master of Westminster in possession of the field, it is not from want of courage, it less can be from want of capacity, to prolong the contest; it can only be from the operation of reason on a candid mind, and a clearer view of that system, which whilst he was denouncing he probably did not recollect that he was himself most unequivocally patronizing in the instance of his own son, Di-

version of thought I well know is not uncommon with him, perversion never will be imputed to him.

When I found upon coming into the Shell that my station was to be quiescent, and that all challenging for places was at an end, I regretted it as an opportunity lost for turning out with new competitors, so much my seniors in age, and who seemed to regard me with an air of conscious superiority. I sate down however with ardor to my school business and also to my private studies, and I soon perceived that I had now no discouragements to contend with in my attempts at composition, for the very first exercise in Latin verse, which I gave in, gained the candid approbation of the master, and from that moment I acquired a degree of confidence in myself, that gave vigour to my exertions; and though I bear all possible respect and gratitude to the memory of that kind friend of my youth, whose rigour was only the effect of anxiety for my well-doing, yet I cannot look back to this period of my education without acknowledging the advantages I experienced in being thus transplanted to Westminster, where to attempt was to suc-

ceed, and placed under a master, whose principle it evidently was to cherish every spark of genius, which he could discover in his scholars, and who seemed determined so to exercise his authority, that our best motives for obeying him should spring from the affection, that we entertained for him. Arthur Kinsman certainly knew how to make his boys scholars; Doctor Nichols had the art of making his scholars gentlemen; for there was a court of honour in that school, to whose unwritten laws every member of our community was amenable, and which to transgress by any act of meanness, that exposed the offender to public contempt, was a degree of punishment, compared to which the being sentenced to the rod would have been considered as an acquittal or reprieve.

Whilst I am making this remark an instance occurs to me of a certain boy from the fifth, who was summoned before the seniors in the seventh, and convicted of an offence, which in the high spirit of that school argued an abasement of principle and honour: Doctor Nichols having stated the case, demanded their opinion of the crime and what degree of pu-

nishment they conceived it to deserve; their answer was unanimously—"The severest that "could be inflicted"—"I can inflict none more "severe than you have given him," said the master, and dismissed him without any other chastisement.

It was not many days after my admission that I myself stood before him as a culprit, having been reported by the monitor for escaping out of the Abbey during divine service, and joining a party of my school-fellows for the unjustifiable purpose of intruding ourselves upon a meeting of quakers at their devotions. We had not been guilty of any gross impertinence, but the offence was highly reprehensible, and when my turn came to be called up to the master, I presume he saw my contrition, when, turning a mild look upon me, he said aloud—*Erubuit, salva est res*,—and sent me back to my seat.

Was it possible not to love a character like this? Nichols certainly was a complete fine gentleman in his office, and entitled to the respect and affection of his scholars, who in his person found a master not only of the dead languages, but also of the living manners.—

As for me, who had experienced his lenity in the instance above related, it cannot be to my credit that I was destined to put his candour once more to the proof, yet so it was that in an idle moment I was disingenuous enough to give in an exercise in Latin verse, every line of which I had stolen out of Duport, if I rightly recollect. It passed inspection without discovery, and Doctor Nichols, after commending me for the composition, read my verses aloud to the seniors in the seventh form, and was proceeding to renew his praises, when being touched with remorse for the disgraceful trick, by which I had imposed upon him, I fairly confessed that I had pirated every syllable, and humbly begged his pardon—he paused a few moments, and then replied—"Child, I forgive "you; go to your seat, and say nothing of "the matter. You have gained more credit "with me by your ingenuous confession, than "you could have got by your verses, had they "been your own—" I must be allowed to add, in palliation of this disreputable anecdote, that I had the grace to make the voluntary atonement next morning of an exercise as tolerable as my utmost pains and capacity could

render it. I gave it in uncalled for; it was graciously received, and I took occasion to apprize the seniors in the seventh, that I had repented of my attempt.

About this time the victory of Culloden having given the death's-blow to the rebel cause, the Lords Kilmarnock and Balmerino were beheaded upon Tower Hill. The elegant person of the former, and the intrepid deportment of the latter, when suffering on the scaffold, drew pity even from the most obdurate, and I believe it was, at that time very generally lamented, that mercy, the best attribute of kings, was not, or could not be, extended to embrace their melancholy case: every heart that felt compassion for their fate could find a plea for their offence; amongst us at school we had a great majority on the side of mercy, and not a few, who in the spirit of those times, divided in opinion with their party. In the mean while it seemed a point of honour with the boys neither to inflame nor insult each other's feelings on this occasion, and I must consider the decorum observed by such young partisans on such an occasion as a circumstance very highly to their credit. I don't doubt but

respect and delicacy towards our kind and well-beloved master had a leading share in disposing them to that orderly and humane behaviour.

When the rebels were in march and had advanced to Derby appearances were very gloomy; there was a language held by some, who threw off all reserve, that menaced danger, and intimidated many of the best affected. In the height of this alarm, the Honorable Mrs. Wentworth, grandmother of the late Marquis of Rockingham, fearing that the distinguished loyalty of her noble house might expose her to pillage, secured her papers and buried her plate, flying to my father's house for refuge, where she remained an inmate during the immediate pressure of the danger she apprehended. Here I found her at my breaking up from school, a fugitive from her mansion at Harrowden, and residing in the parsonage house at Stanwick. She was a venerable and excellent lady, and retained her friendship for my family to her death: she gave me a copy of the great Earl of Strafford's Letters in two folio volumes magnificently bound.

This was the time for my good father, who

I verily think never knew fear, to stand forward in the exertion of that popularity, which was almost without example. He had been conspicuously active in assembling the people of the neighbouring parishes, where his influence laid, and persuading them to enroll and turn out in the defence of their country. This he did in the very crisis of general despondency and alarm, whilst the disaffected in a near-neighbouring quarter, abetted by a noble family, which I need not name, in the height of their exultation were burning him in effigy, as a person most obnoxious to their principles and most hostile to their cause. In a short time, at the expence merely of the enlisting shilling per man, he raised two full companies of one hundred each for the regiment then enrolling under the command of the Earl of Halifax, and marched them in person to Northampton, attended by four picked men on his four coach horses, where he was received on his entrance into the town with shouts and acclamations expressive of applause so fairly merited. The Earl of Halifax, then high in character and graceful in his person, received this tribute of my father's loyalty as might naturally be ex-

pected, and as a mark of his consideration insisted upon bestowing one of these companies upon me, for which I had the commission, though I was then too young to take the command. An officer was named, with the approbation of my father, to act in my place, and the regiment set out on their route for Carlisle, then in the hands of the Highlanders. There many of them lost their lives in the siege, and the small pox made such cruel havock amongst our young peasantry, that, although they had in the first instance been cheaply raised, the distresses of their families brought a very considerable and lasting charge upon the bounty of my father.

I remained at Westminster School, as well as I can recollect, half a year in the Shell, and one year in the sixth form, and I cannot reflect upon this period of my education without acknowledging the reason I have to be contented with the time so passed. I did not indeed drink long and deeply at the Helicon of that distinguished seminary, but I had a taste of the spring and felt the influence of the waters. In point of composition I particularly profited, for which I conceive there is in that school a

kind of taste and character, peculiar to itself, and handed down perhaps from times long past, which seems to mark it out for a distinction, that it may indisputably claim, that of having been above all others the most favoured cradle of the Muses. If any are disposed to question this assertion, let them turn to the lives and histories of the poets, and satisfy their doubts. I know there is a tide, that flows from the very fountain-head of power, that has long run strongly in another channel, but the vicinity of Windsor Castle is of no benefit to the discipline and good order of Eton-School. A wise father will no more estimate his son's improvement by the measure of his boarding house bills and pocket money amount, than a good soldier will fix his preference on a corps, because it happens to figure in the most splendid uniform, and indulge at the most voluptuous and extravagant mess.

When I returned to school I was taken as a boarder into the family of Edmund Ashby Esquire, elder brother of Waring, who had been married to my father's sister. This gentleman had a wife and three daughters, and occupied a spacious house in Peter Street, two

doors from the turning out of College Street. Having been set aside by the will of his father, he was in narrow circumstances, and his style of living was that of œconomy upon the strictest scale. No visitor ever entered his doors, nor did he ever go out of them in search of amusement or society. Temperate in the extreme, placid and unruffled, he simply vegetated without occupation, did nothing, and had nothing to do, never seemed to trouble himself with much thinking, or interrupt the thoughts of others with much talking, and I don't recollect ever to have found him engaged with a newspaper, or a book, so that had it not been for the favours I received from a few Canary birds which the ladies kept, I might as well have boarded in the convent of La Trappe. I confess my spirits felt the gloomy influence of the sphere I lived in, and my nights were particularly long and heavy, annoyed as they were by the yells and howlings of the crews of the depredators, which infested that infamous quarter, and sometimes even roused and alarmed us by their pilfering attacks. In some respects however I was benefited by my removal from Ludford's, as I was no longer under the

strict confinement to a boarding house, but was once or twice allowed to go, under proper convoy, to the play, where for the first time in my life I was treated with the sight of Garrick in the character of Lothario; Quin played Horatio, Ryan Altamont, Mrs. Cibber Calista and Mrs. Pritchard condescended to the humble part of Lavinia. I enjoyed a good view of the stage from the front row of the gallery, and my attention was rivetted to the scene. I have the spectacle even now as it were before my eyes. Quin presented himself upon the rising of the curtain in a green velvet coat embroidered down the seams, an enormous full bottomed periwig, rolled stockings and high-heeled square-toed shoes: with very little variation of cadence, and in a deep full tone, accompanied by a sawing kind of action, which had more of the senate than of the stage in it, he rolled out his heroics with an air of dignified indifference, that seemed to disdain the plaudits that were bestowed upon him. Mrs. Cibber in a key, high-pitched but sweet withal, sung or rather recitatived Rowe's harmonious strain, something in the manner of the Improvisatories: it was so extremely wanting

in contrast, that, though it did not wound the ear, it wearied it; when she had once recited two or three speeches, I could anticipate the manner of every succeeding one; it was like a long old legendary ballad of innumerable stanzas, every one of which is sung to the same tune, eternally chiming in the ear without variation or relief. Mrs. Pritchard was an actress of a different cast, had more nature, and of course more change of tone, and variety both of action and expression: in my opinion the comparison was decidedly in her favour; but when after long and eager expectation I first beheld little Garrick, then young and light and alive in every muscle and in every feature, come bounding on the stage, and pointing at the wittol Altamont and heavy-paced Horatio —heavens, what a transition!—it seemed as if a whole century had been stept over in the transition of a single scene; old things were done away, and a new order at once brought forward, bright and luminous, and clearly destined to dispel the barbarisms and bigotry of a tasteless age, too long attached to the prejudices of custom, and superstitiously devoted to

the illusions of imposing declamation. This heaven-born actor was then struggling to emancipate his audience from the slavery they were resigned to, and though at times he succeeded in throwing in some gleams of new born light upon them, yet in general they seemed to *love darkness better than light*, and in the dialogue of altercation between Horatio and Lothario bestowed far the greater *show of hands* upon the master of the old school than upon the founder of the new. I thank my stars, my feelings in those moments led me right; they were those of nature, and therefore could not err.

At the house of Mr. Ashby I had a room to myself, a solitude within it, and silence without; I had no plea for neglecting my studies, for I had no avocations to draw me off, and no amusements to resort to. I pressed my private studies without intermission, and having taken up the Georgicks for recreation-sake, I began to entertain myself with a translation in blank verse of Virgil's beautiful description of the plague amongst the cattle, beginning at verse 478 of the third book, and continued to the end of the same, viz.—

Hic quondam morbo cœli miseranda coorta est
Tempestas—&c. &c.

As this is one of the very few samples of my *Juvenilia*, which I have thought well enough of to preserve, I shall now insert it *verbatim* from my first copy, and, without repeating former apologies, submit it unaltered in a single instance to the candour of the reader—

" Here once from foul and sickly vapours sprung
" A piteous plague, through all th' autumnal heats
" Fatally raging: not a beast throughout,
" Savage or tame, escap'd the general bane.
" The foodful pasture and frequented pool
" Lay charg'd with mischief; death itself assum'd
" Strange forms of horror, for when fiery drought
" Pervasive, coursing through the circling blood,
" The feeble limbs had wasted, straight again
" The oozy poison work'd its cursed way,
" Sapping the solid bones; they by degrees
" Sunk to corruption. Oft the victim beast,
" As at the altar's sacred foot it stood,
" With all its wreathy honours on its head,
" Dropt breathless, and escap'd the tardy blow.
" Or if its lingering spirit might chance t' await
" The priest's death-dealing hand, no flames arise
" From the disposed entrails; there they lie
" In thick and unpresaging smoke obscur'd.
" The question'd augur holds his peace, and sees

" His divination foil'd; the slaughtering blade
" Scarce quits its paly hue, and the light sand
" Scarce blushes with the thin and meagre blood.
" Hence o'er the pasture rich and plenteous stalls
" The tender herd in fragrant sighs expire;
" Fell madness seizes the domestic dog;
" The pursy swine heave with repeated groans,
" A rattling cough inflames their swelling throats:
" No toils secure, no palm the victor-horse
" Availeth, now no more the wholesome spring
" Delights, no longer now the once-lov'd mead;
" The fatal ill prevails; with anguish stung
" Raging he stamps, his ears hang down relax'd;
" Sometimes an intermitting sweat breaks forth,
" Cold ever at th' approach of death; again
" The dry and staring hide grows stiff and hard,
" Scorch'd and impasted with the feverish heat.
" Such the first signs of ruin, but at length
" When the accomplish'd and mature disease
" With its collected and full vigour works,
" The red'ning eye-balls glow with baneful fire,
" The deep and hollow breath with frequent groans,
" Piteous variety—! is sorely mix'd,
" And long-drawn sighs distend the labŏuring sides:
" Then forth the porches of the nose descends,
" As from a conduit, blood defil'd and black,
" And 'twixt the glew'd and unresolved jaws
" The rough and clammy tongue sticks fast—at first
" With generous wine they drench'd the closing throat—
" Sole antidote, worse bane at last—for then
" Dire madness—such as the just Gods to none

" Save to the bad consign!—at the last pang
" Arose, whereat their teeth with fatal gripe,
" Like pale and ghastly executioners,
" Their fair and sightly limbs all mangled o'er.
" The lab'ring ox, while o'er the furrow'd land
" He trails the tardy plough, down drops at once,
" Forth issues bloody foam, till the last groan
" Gives a long close to his labours: The sad hind
" Unyokes his widow'd and complainful mate,
" Leaving the blasted and imperfect work
" Where the fix'd ploughshare points the luckless spot.
" The shady covert, where the lofty trees
" Form cool retreat, the lawns, whose springing herb
" Yields food ambrosial, the transparent stream,
" Which o'er the jutting stones to th' neighb'ring mead
" Takes its fantastic course, these now no more
" Delight, as they were wont, rather afflict,
" With him they cheer'd, with him their joys expir'd,
" Joys only in participation dear:
" Famine instead stares in his hollow sides,
" His leaden eye-balls, motionless and fix'd,
" Sleep in their sockets, his unnerved neck
" Hangs drooping down, death lays his load upon him,
" And bows him to the ground—what now avail
" His useful toils, his life of service past?
" What though full oft he turn'd the stubborn glebe,
" It boots not now—yet have these never felt
" The ills of riot and intemperate draughts,
" Where the full goblet crowns the luscious feast:
" Their only feast to graze the springing herb
" O'er the fresh lawn, or from the pendant bough

" To crop the savŏury leaf, from the clear spring,
" Or active stream refined in its course,
" They slake their sober thirst, their sweet repose
" Nor cares forbid, nor soothing arts invite,
" But pure digestion breeds and light repast.
" 'Twas then great Juno's altar ceas'd to smoke
" With blood of bullocks, and the votive car
" With huge misshapen buffaloes was drawn
" To the high temples. Each one till'd his field,
" Each sow'd his acres with their owner's hand,
" Or, bending to the yoke with straining neck,
" Up the high steep dragg'd the slow load along.
" No more the wolf with crafty siege infests
" The nightly fold; more pressing cares than these
" Engage the sly contriver and subdue.
" The fearful deer league with the hostile hound,
" And ply about the charitable door
" Familiar, unannoy'd. The mighty deep
" At every mouth disgorg'd the scaly tribe,
" And on the naked shore expos'd to view
" The various wreck: the farthest rivers felt
" The vast discharge and swarm'd with monstrous shapes.
" In vain the viper builds his mazy cell;
" Death follows him through all his wiles: in vain
" The snake involves him deep beneath the flood,
" Wond'ring he starts, erects his scales and dies.
" The birds themselves confess the tainted air,
" Drop while on wing, and as they soar expire.
" Nought now avails the pasture fresh and new;
" Each art applied turns opposite; e'en they,
" Sage Chiron, sage Melampus, they despair,

" Whilst pale Tisiphone, come fresh from hell,
" Driving before her Pestilence and Fear,
" Her ministers of vengeance to fulfil
" Her dread commission, rages all abroad,
" And lifts herself on ruin day by day
" More and more high. The hollow banks resound,
" The winding streams and hanging hills repeat
" Loud groans from ev'ry herd, from ev'ry fold
" Complaintive murmurs; heaps on heaps they fall,
" There where they fall they lie, corrupt and rot
" Within the lothsome stalls, fill'd and dam'd up
" With impure carcases, till they perform
" The necessary office and confine
" Deep under ground the foul offensive stench:
" For neither might you dress the putrid hide,
" Nor could the purifying stream remove,
" The vigorous all-subduing flame expel
" The close incorporate poison: none essay'd
" To shear the tainted fleece, or bind the wool,
" For who e'er dar'd to cloath his desp'rate limbs
" With that Nessean garment, a foul sweat,
" A vile and lep'rous *tetter bark'd about*
" *All his smooth body*, nor long he endur'd,
" But in the sacred fire consum'd and died."

A great and heavy affliction now befel my parents and myself. A short time before my holidays in autumn my father and mother came to town, and brought my eldest sister Joanna with them, a very lovely girl then in her se-

venteenth year. She caught the small pox, and died in the house of the Reverend Doctor Cutts Barton, Rector of Saint Andrew's Holborn, who kindly permitted my father to remove thither, when she sickened with that cruel disease. She was truly most engaging in her person, and, though much admired, her manners were extremely modest, and her temper mild and gentle. When I first visited her, after the symptoms of the disease were upon her, she told me she was persuaded she had caught the small pox, and that it would be fatal to her. Her augury was too true; it was confluent, and assistance was in vain; the regimen then followed was exactly contrary to the present improved method of treating that disease, which, when it had kept her in torments for eleven days, having effectually destroyed her beauty, finally put an end to her life. My father, who tenderly loved her, submitted to the afflicting dispensation in silent sadness, never venting a complaint; my mother's sorrows were not under such controul, and as to me, devoted to her as I had been from my cradle, the shock appeared to threaten me with such consequences, that my father resolved upon

taking me out of town immediately, and we went down to our abode at Stanwick, a sad and melancholy party, while Mr. Ashby, my father's nephew, staid in town and attended the body of his lamented cousin to the grave. My surviving sisters, Elizabeth and Mary, the elder of whom was six years younger than myself, had been left in the country; the attentions, which these young creatures had a claim to, the consolatory visits of our friends, and the healing hand of time by degrees assuaged the keenness of affliction, and patient resignation did the rest.

The alarm, which my father had been under on account of my health upon my sister's death, and the abhorrence he had conceived of London since that unfortunate event, determined him against my return to Westminster, and though another year, which my early age might well have dispensed with, was recommended by Doctor Nichols, and would most probably have been so employed with advantage to my education, yet the measure was taken, and though only in my fourteenth year, I was admitted of Trinity College in Cambridge. There were yet some months of the

vacation unexpired, and that I might pass this time at home with the more advantage, my father prevailed upon a neighbouring clergyman, the Reverend Mr. Thomas Strong, to reside with us and assist me in my studies. A better man I never knew, a brighter scholar might easily have been found, yet we read together some few hours in every day, and those readings were almost entirely confined to the Greek Testament: there I had a teacher in Mr. Strong well worthy of my best attention, for none could better recommend by practice what he illustrated by precept, than this exemplary young man. He sometime after married very happily, and resided on his living of Hargrave in our neighbourhood universally respected, and I trust it is not amongst my sins of omission ever after to have forgotten his services, or failed in my attention to him.

When the time came for me to commence my residence in College, my father accompanied me and put me under the care of the Reverend Doctor Morgan, an old friend of our family and a senior fellow of that society. My rooms were closely adjoining to his, belonging to that staircase, which leads to the chapel

bell; he was kind to me when we met, but as tutor I had few communications with him, for the gout afforded him not many intervals of ease, and with the exception of a few trifling readings in Tully's Offices, by which I was little edified, and to which I paid little or no attention, he left me and one other pupil, my friend and intimate Mr. William Rudd of Durham, to choose and pursue our studies, as we saw fit. This dereliction of us was inexcusable, for Rudd was a youth of fine talents and a well-grounded scholar. In the course of no long time however Doctor Morgan left college, and went to reside upon his living of Gainford in the bishoprick of Durham, and I was turned over to the Reverend Doctor Philip Young, professor of Oratory in the University, and afterwards Bishop of Norwich; what Morgan made a very light concern, Young made an absolute sinecure, for from him I never received a single lecture, and I hope his lordship's conscience was not much disturbed on my account, for, though he gave me free leave to be idle, I did not make idleness my choice.

In the last year of my being under-graduate, when I commenced Soph, in the very first act

that was given out to be kept in the mathematical schools, I was appointed to an opponency, when at that time I had not read a single proposition in Euclid; I had now been just turned over to Mr. Backhouse, the Westminster tutor, who gave regular lectures, and fulfilled the duties of his charge ably and conscientiously. Totally unprepared to answer the call now made upon me, and acquit myself in the schools, I resorted to him in my distress, and through his interference my name was withdrawn from the act; in the mean time I was sent for by the master Doctor Smith, the learned author of the well known Treatises upon Optics and Harmonics, and the worthy successor to my grandfather Bentley, who strongly reprobated the neglect of my former tutors, and recommended me to lose no more time in preparing myself for my degree, but to apply closely to my academical studies for the remainder of the year, which I assured him I would do.

As I did not belong to Mr. Backhouse till I had commenced Soph, but nominally to those, who left me to myself, I had hitherto pursued those studies that were familiar to me,

and indulged my passions for the classics with an ardor, that rarely knew any intermission or relief. I certainly did not wantonly misuse my time, or yield to any even of the slightest excesses, that youth is prone to: I never frequented any tavern, neither gave nor received entertainments, nor partook in any parties of pleasure, except now and then, in a ride to the hills, so that I thank God I have not to reproach myself with any instances of misconduct towards a generous father, who at this tender age committed me to my own discretion and confided in me. I look back therefore upon this period of my life with a tranquil conscience; I even dwell upon it with peculiar delight, for within those maternal walls I passed years given up to study and those intellectual pure enjoyments, which leave no self-reproach, whilst with the works of my ancestors in my hands, and the impression of their examples on my heart, I flattered myself in the belief that I was pressing forward ardently and successfully to follow them in their profession, and peradventure not fall far behind them in their fame. This was the great aim and object

of my ambition; for this I laboured, to this point I looked, and all my world was centered in my college. Every scene brought to my mind the pleasing recollection of times past, and filled it with the animating hope of times to come: as my college duties and attendances were occupations that I took pleasure in, punctuality and obedience did not put me to the trouble of an effort, for when to be employed is our amusement, there is no self-denial in not being idle. If I had then had a tutor, who would have systematized and arranged my studies, it would have been happy for me; but I had no such director, and with my books before me, (poets, historians and philosophers) sate down as it were to a *cœna dubia*, with an eager, rather than a discriminating, appetite; I am now speaking of my course of reading from my admission to my commencing Soph, when I was called off to my academical studies. In that period my stock of books was but slender, till Doctor Richard Bentley had the goodness to give me a valuable parcel of my grandfather's books and papers, containing his correspondence with many of the foreign literati upon points of criticism, some

letters from Sir Isaac Newton, a pretty large body of notes for an edition of Lucan's Pharsalia, which I gave to my uncle Bentley, and were published under his inspection by Dodsley at Mr. Walpole's press, with sundry other manuscripts, and a considerable number of Greek and Latin books, mostly collated by him and their margins filled with alterations and corrections in his own hand, neatly and legibly written in a very small character. The possession of these books was most gratifying and acceptable to me; some few of them were extremely rare, and in the history I have given in *The Observers* of the Greek Writers, more particularly of the Comic Poets now lost, I have availed myself of them, and I am vain enough to believe no such collection of the scattered extracts, anecdotes and remains of those dramatists is any where else to be found. The donor of these books was the nephew of my grandfather, and inherited by will the whole of his library, which at his death was sold by auction in Leicestershire, where he resided in his latter years on his rectory of Nailstone! he was himself no inconsiderable collector, and it is much to be regretted that his executors took

this method of disposing of his books, by which they became dispersed in small lots amongst many country purchasers, who probably did not know their value. He was an accurate collater, and for his judgment in editions much resorted to by Doctor Mead, with whom he lived in great intimacy. During the time that he resided in college, for he was one of the senior fellows of Trinity, he gave me every possible proof, not only in this instance of his donation, but in many others, of his favor and protection.

At the same time Doctor Richard Walker, the friend of my grandfather, and vice-master of the college, never failed to distinguish me by every kindness in his power. He frequently invited me to his rooms, which I had so often visited as a child, and which had the further merit with me as having been the residence of Sir Isaac Newton, every relick of whose studies and experiments were respectfully preserved to the minutest particular, and pointed out to me by the good old vice-master with the most circumstantial precision. He had many little anecdotes of my grandfather, which to me at least were interesting, and an

old servant Deborah, whom he made a kind of companion, and who was much in request for the many entertaining circumstances she could narrate of Sir Isaac Newton, when she waited upon him as his bedmaker, and also of Doctor Bentley, with whom she lived for several years after Sir Isaac left college, and at the death of my grandfather was passed over to Doctor Walker, in whose service she died.

My mind in these happy days was so tranquil, and my time passed in so uniform a tenor of study and retirement, that though it is a period pleasing to me to reflect upon, yet it furnishes little that is worthy to be recorded. I believe I hardly ever employed myself upon English composition, except on the event of the Prince of Wales's death, when amongst others I sent in my contribution of elegiac verses to the university volume, and very indifferent ones they were. To my Latin declamations I paid my best attention, for these were recited publicly in the chapel after evening prayers on Saturdays, when it was open to all, who chose to resort thither, and we were generally flattered by pretty full audiences.

The year of trial now commenced, for which,

through the neglect of my tutors, I was, as an academical student, totally unprepared. Determined to use every effort in my power for redeeming my lost time, I began a course of study so apportioned as to allow myself but six hours sleep, to which I strictly adhered, living almost entirely upon milk, and using the cold bath very frequently. As I was then only seventeen years old, and of a frame by no means robust, many of my friends remonstrated against the severity of this regimen, and recommended more moderation, but the encouragement I met in the rapidity of my progress through all the dry and elementary parts of my studies determined me to persist with ardour, and made me deaf to their advice. In the several branches of the mechanics, hydrostatics, optics and astronomy I consulted the best treatises, and made myself master of them; I worked all my propositions, formed all my minutes, and even my thoughts, in Latin, whereby I acquired a facility of expounding, solving and arguing in that language, in which I may presume to say I had advantages, which some of the best of my contemporaries in our public disputations were but too sensible of, for so

long as my knowledge of a question could supply matter for argument, I never felt any want of terms for explanation.

When I found myself prepared to take my part in the public schools, I thirsted for the opportunity, which I no longer dreaded, and with this my ambition was soon gratified, being appointed to *keep an act*, and three respectable opponents singled out against me, the first of which was looked up to as the best of the year. When his name was given out for disputation the schools never failed to be crowded, and as I had drawn my questions from Newton's Principia, I gave him fair scope for the display of his superiority, and was by all considered, (for his fame was universal) as a mere child in his hands, justly to be punished for my temerity, and self-devoted to complete confutation. I was not only a mere novice in the schools but also a perfect stranger to the gentlemen opposed to me; when therefore mounted on a bass in the rostrum, which even then I could scarcely overtop, I contemplated, in the person of my antagonist, a North-country black-bearded philosopher, who at an advanced age had admitted at Saint John's to

qualify for holy orders, (even at that time a finished mathematician and a private lecturer in those studies,) I did not wonder that the contrast of a beardless boy, pale and emaciated as I was then become, seemed to attract every body's curiosity; for after I had concluded my thesis, which precedes the disputation, when he ascended his seat under the rostrum of the Moderator——

With grave
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
A pillar of strength; deep in his front engraven
Deliberation sate—sage he stood
With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
The weight of mightiest argument——

Formidable as he appeared, I did not feel my spirits sink, for I had taken a very careful survey of the ground I was upon, and thought myself prepared against any attack he could devise against me. I also saw that all advantages, resulting from the unequal terms on which we engaged, were on my side; I might obtain glory from him, and he could but little profit by his triumph over me. My heart was in my cause, and proudly measuring its importance by the crowd it had collected, armed, as

I believed myself to be, in the full understanding of my questions, and a perfect readiness in the language, in which our disputations were to be carried on, I waited his attack amidst the hum and murmur of the assembly. His argument was purely mathematical, and so enveloped in the terms of his art, as made it somewhat difficult for me to discover where his syllogism pointed without those aids and delineations, which our process did not allow of; I availed myself of my privilege to call for a repetition of it, when at once I caught the fallacy and pursued it with advantage, keeping the clue firm in hand till I completely traced him through all the windings of his labyrinth. The same success attended me through the remaining seven arguments, which fell off in strength and subtlety, and his defence became sullen and morose, his latinity very harsh, inelegant and embarrassed, till I saw him descend with no very pleasant countenance, whilst it appeared evident to me that my whole audience were not displeased with the unexpected turn, which our controversy had taken. He ought in course to have been succeeded by a second and third opponent, but our disputation had

24024

already been prolonged beyond the time commonly allotted, and the schools were broken up by the Moderator with a compliment addressed to me in terms much out of the usual course on such occasions.

If it is allowable for me to speak of such trifling events circumstantially and with the importance, which at that time I attached to them, when I knew nothing of this great world beyond the walls of my college, I hope this passage will be read with candour, and that I shall be pardoned for a long tale told in my old age of the first triumph of my youth, earned by extreme hard labour, and gained at the risque and hazard of my health by a perseverance in so severe a course of study, as brought me ultimately to the very brink of the grave.

Four times I went through these scholastic exercises in the course of the year, keeping two acts and as many first opponencies. In one of the latter, where I was pitched against an ingenious student of my own college, I contrived to form certain arguments, which by a scale of deductions so artfully drawn, and involving consequences, which by mathematical

gradations (the premises being once granted) led to such unforeseen confutation, that even my tutor Mr. Backhouse, to whom I previously imparted them, was effectually trapped and could as little parry them, as the gentleman, who kept the act, or the Moderator, who filled the chair.

The last time I was called upon to keep an act in the schools I sent in three questions to the Moderator, which he withstood as being all mathematical, and required me to conform to the usage of proposing one metaphysical question in the place of that, which I should think fit to withdraw. This was ground I never liked to take, and I appealed against his requisition: the act was accordingly put by till the matter of right should be ascertained by the statutes of the university, and in the result of that enquiry it was given for me, and my questions stood. This litigation between the Moderator and an Under-graduate, whose interest in the distribution of honors at the ensuing degree laid so much at the mercy of his report, made a considerable stir and gave rise to much conversation; so that when this long suspended act took place, not only the

floor of the schools was filled with the juniors, but many of high standing in the university assembled in the gallery. The Moderator had nominated the same gentleman as my first opponent, who no doubt felt every motive to renew the contest, and bring me to a proper sense of my presumption. The term was now drawing near to its close, and I began to feel very sensibly the effects of my too intense application, my whole frame being debilitated in a manner, that warned me I had not long to continue my course of labour without the interruption of some serious attack; I had in fact the seeds of a rheumatic fever lurking in my constitution, and was led between two of my friends and fellow collegians to the schools in a very feeble state. I was however intellectually alive to all the purposes of the business we were upon, and when I observed that the Moderator exhibited symptoms of indisposition by resting his head upon the cushion on his desk, I cut short my thesis to make way for my opponent, who had hardly brought his argument to bear, when the Moderator, on the plea of sudden indisposition, dismissed me with a speech, which, though tinctured with some

petulance, had more of praise in it than I expected to receive.

I yielded now to advice, and paid attention to my health, till we were cited to the senate house to be examined for our Bachelor's degree. It was hardly ever my lot during that examination to enjoy any respite. I seemed an object singled out as every man's mark, and was kept perpetually at the table under the process of question and answer. My constitution just held me up to the expiration of the scrutiny, and I immediately hastened to my own home to alarm my parents with my ghastly looks, and soon fell ill of a rheumatic fever, which for the space of six months kept me hovering between life and death. The skill of my physician, the aforementioned Doctor Wallis of Stamford, and the tender attention of the dear friends about me, rescued me at length, and I recovered under their care. Whilst I was in this state I had the pleasure of hearing from Cambridge of the high station, which had been adjudged to me amongst *The Wranglers* of my year, and I further understood how much I was indebted to the generous support of that very Moderator, whom I had

thwarted in the matter of my questions, for this adjudication so much in my favour and perhaps above my merits, for my knowledge had been hastily attained: a conduct so candid on the part of the Reverend Mr. Ray, (fellow of Corpus Christi, and the Moderator, of whom I have been speaking) was ever remembered by me with gratitude and respect: Mr. Ray was afterwards domestic chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and, when I was resident in town, I waited upon him at Lambeth palace to express my sensibility of the very liberal manner, in which he had protected me.

I now found myself in a station of ease and credit in my native college, to which I was attached by every tye, that could endear it to me. I had changed my Under-graduate's gown, and obtained my degree of Bachelor of Arts with honors hardly earned by pains the more severe because so long postponed: and now if I have been seemingly too elaborate in tracing my own particular progress through these exercises, to which the candidate for a degree at Cambridge must of necessity conform, it is not merely because I can quote my privilege for my excuse, but because I would

most earnestly impress upon the attention of my reader the extreme usefulness of these academical exercises and the studies appertaining to them, by which I consider all the purposes of an university education are completed; and so convinced am I of this, that I can hardly allow myself to call that an education, of which they do not make a part; if therefore I am to speak for the discipline of the schools, ought I not first to show that I am speaking from experience, without which opinions pass for nothing? Having therefore first demonstrated what my experience of that discipline has been, I have the authority of that, as far as it goes, for an opinion in its favour, which every observation of my life has since contributed to establish and confirm. What more can any system of education hold out to those, who are the objects of it, than public honours to distinguish merit, public exercises to awaken emulation, and public examinations, which cannot be passed without extorting some exertion even from the indolent, nor can be avoided without a marked disgrace to the *compounder*? Now if I have any knowledge of the world,

any insight into the minds and characters of those, whom I have had opportunities of knowing, (and few have lived more and longer amongst mankind) all my observations tend to convince me that there is no profession, no art, no station or condition in life, to which the studies I have been speaking of will not apply and come in aid with profit and advantage. That mode of investigation step by step, which crowns the process of the student by the demonstration and discovery of positive and mathematical truth, must of necessity so exercise and train him in the habits of following up his subject, be it what it may, and working out his proofs, as cannot fail to find their uses, whether he, who has them, dictates from the pulpit, argues at the bar or declaims in the senate ; nay, there is no lot, no station, (I repeat it with confidence) be it either social or sequestered, conspicuous or obscure, professional or idly independent, in which the man, once exercised in these studies, though he shall afterwards neglect them, will not to his comfort experience some mental powers and resources, in which their in-

fluence shall be felt, though the channels, that conducted it, may from disuse have become obscure, and no longer to be traced.

Hear the crude opinions, that are let loose upon society in our table conversations; mark the wild and wandering arguments, that are launched at random without ever hitting the mark they should be levelled at; what does all this noise and nonsense prove, but that the talker has indeed acquired the fluency of words, but never known the exercise of thought, or attended to the developement of a single proposition? Tell him that he ought to hear what may be said on the other side of the question—he agrees to it, and either begs leave to wind up with a few words more, which he winds and wire-draws without end; or having paused to hear, hears with impatience a very little, foreknows every thing you had further to say, cuts short your argument and bolts in upon you—with an answer to that argument—? No; with a continuation of his own gabble, and, having stifled you with the torrent of his trash, places your contempt to the credit of his own capacity, and foolishly conceives he talks with reason be-

cause he has not patience to attend to any reasoning but his own.

What are all the quirks and quibbles, that skirmishers in controversy catch hold of to escape the point of any argument, when pressed upon them? If a laugh, a jeer, a hit of mimickry, or buffoonery cannot parry the attack, they find themselves disarmed of the only weapons they can wield, and then, though truth should stare them in the face, they will affect not to see it: instead of receiving conviction as the acquirement of something, which they had not themselves and have gained from you, they regard it as an insult to their understandings, and grow sullen and resentful; they will then tell you they shall leave you to your own opinions, they shall say no more, and with an air of importance wrap themselves up in a kind of contemptuous indifference, when their reason for saying nothing is only because they have nothing more to say. How many of this cast of character are to be met with in the world every man of the world can witness.

There are also others, whose vivacity of imagination having never felt the trammels of a

syllogism is for ever flying off into digression and display—

Quo teneam nodo mutantem Protea formas?—

To attempt at hedging in these cuckows is but lost labour. These gentlemen are very entertaining as long as novelties with no meaning can entertain you; they have a great variety of opinions, which, if you oppose, they do not defend, and if you agree with, they desert. Their talk is like the wild notes of birds, amongst which you shall distinguish some of pleasant tone, but out of which you compose no tune or harmony of song. These men would have set down Archimedes for a fool when he danced for joy at the solution of a proposition, and mistaken Newton for a madman, when in the surplice, which he put on for chapel over night he was found the next morning in the same place and posture fixed in profound meditation on his theory of the prismatic colours. So great is their distaste for demonstration, they think no truth is worth the waiting for; the mountain must come to them, they are not by half so complaisant as Mahomet. They are not easily reconciled to truisms, but have no particular objection to

impossibilities. For argument they have no ear; it does not touch them; it fetters fancy, and dulls the edge of repartee; if by chance they find themselves in an untenable position, and wit is not at hand to help them out of it, they will take up with a pun, and ride home upon a horse laugh: if they can't keep their ground, they won't wait to be attacked and driven out of it. Whilst a reasoning man will be picking his way out of a dilemma, they, who never reason at all, jump over it, and land themselves at once upon new ground, where they take an imposing attitude, and escape pursuit. Whatever these men do, whether they talk, or write, or act, it is without deliberation, without consistency, without plan. Having no expanse of mind, they can comprehend only in part; they will promise an epic poem, and produce an epigram: In short, they glitter, pass away and are forgotten; their outset makes a show of mighty things, they stray out of their course into bye-ways and obliquities, and when out of sight of their contemporaries, are for ever lost to posterity.

When characters of this sort come under our observation it is easy to discover that their le-

vities and frivolities have their source in the errors and defects of education, for it is evident they have not been trained in any principles of right-reasoning. Therefore it is that I hold in such esteem the academical studies pursued at Cambridge, and regard their exercises in the mathematical schools, and their examinations in the theatre, as forming the best system, which this country offers, for the education of its youth. Persuaded as I am of this, I must confess I have ever considered the election of scholars from the college of Eton to that of King's in Cambridge, as a bar greatly in their disfavour, forasmuch as by the constitution of that college they are not subjected to the same process for attaining their degrees, and of course the study of the mathematics makes no part of their system, but is merely optional. I leave this remark to those, who may think it worthy of their consideration. Under-graduates of Trinity College, whether elected from Westminster or not, have no such exemptions.

Having now, at an age more than commonly early, obtained my Bachelor's degree, with the return of health I resumed my studies, and without neglecting those I had so lately been

engaged in, again took up those authors, who had lain by untouched for a whole twelvemonth. I supposed my line in life was decided for the church, the profession of my ancestors, and in the course of three years I had good reason to expect a fellowship with the degree of Master of Arts. These views, so suited to my natural disposition, were now before me, and I dwelt upon them with entire content.

Having now been in the habit of reading upon system, I resolved to put my thoughts together upon paper, and began to form a kind of *Collectanea* of my studies. With this view I got together all the tracts relative to the controversy between Boyle and Bentley, omitting none even of the authorities and passages they referred to, and having done this, I comprised the reasonings on both sides into a kind of statement and report upon the question in dispute, and if in the result my judgment went with him, to whom my inclination lent, no learned critic of the present age will condemn me for the decision.

When I had accomplished this I meditated on a plan little short of what might be projected for an Universal History, or at least for

that of the Great Empires in particular. For this purpose I began with studying the Sanchoniatho of Bishop Cumberland, contrasting the Phœnician and Egyptian Cosmogonies with that of Moses, by which I found myself at length involved in references to so many authors, which I had no means of consulting, and so hampered by Oriental languages, which I did not understand, that after filling a large folio foul-book, which I still keep in possession, I gave up the task, or more properly speaking reduced it to a more contracted scale, in which however I contrived to review all the several systems of the Heathen Philosophers, and discuss at large the tenets and opinions maintained and professed by their respective schools and academies. This was a work of labour and considerable research, and having had lately occasion to resort to it for certain purposes, which I have in hand, I must do myself the justice to say I found it very accurate, and derived all the aid and information from it that I expected or required. That I was at that age disposed and able to apply my mind to a work so operose and argumentative I ascribe entirely to the nature of the studies,

and the habitudes of thinking, I had so recently been engaged in.

Thus, after wandering at large for a considerable time without any one to guide me, I was at last compelled to chalk out for myself a settled plan of reading, which, if I had not been disciplined as above described, I certainly should have long postponed, or perhaps never have struck out. Why will not those, whose duty it is to superintend the education of their pupils in our universities, when they discover talents and a thirst for learning, point out to the student the best and nearest road to its attainment? It is surely within their province to do it, and the benefit would be incalculable.

I well remember, when I was newly come to college, with what avidity I read the Greek tragedians, and with what reverence I swallowed the absurdities of their chorus, and was bigoted to their cold character and rigid unities; and when Mason of Pembroke-Hall published his Elfrida after their model, though I did not quite agree with him as to his choice of plot, or the perfect legitimacy of his chorus, yet I was warm in my praises of that generally-admired production, and in imitation of it

planned and composed an entire drama, of which Charactacus was the hero, with Bards and Druids attached to it as a chorus, for whom I wrote Odes in the manner of Elfrida; I have this manuscript now in my possession, and it is flattering to my choice of subject that Mason, with whom I had no communication or correspondence, should afterwards strike upon the same character for the hero of his drama: but though in this particular I have the good chance to agree with him, in point of plot I stray equally from him and from the history, for not writing with any thought of publication, I wove into my drama some characters and several incidents perfectly fictitious: there is a good deal of fancy and some strong writing in it, but as a whole it must be read with allowances, and I shall therefore pass it over, not wishing to make too many demands upon the candour of the reader.

Whilst I was thus living with my family at Stanwick in the enjoyment of every thing that could constitute my felicity, a strong contest took place upon the approach of the general election, and the county of Northampton was hotly canvassed by the rival parties of Knight-

ly and Hanbury, or in other words by the Tories and the Whigs. My father, whose politics accorded with the latter, was drawn out upon this occasion, and gave a very active and effectual support to his party, and though the cause he embarked in was unsuccessful, yet his particular exertions had been such, that he might truly have said—

Si Pergama dextrâ
Defendi possent, etiam hâc defensa fuissent.

This second striking instance of his popularity and influence was by no means overlooked by the Earl of Halifax, then high in office and Lord Lieutenant of the county. Offers, which he did not court, were pressed upon him, but though he was resolute in declining all favours personal to himself, yet he was persuaded to lend an ear to flattering situations pointed out for me, and my destiny was now preparing to reverse those tranquil and delectable scenes, which I had hitherto enjoyed, and to transplant me from the cloisters of my college, and free range of my studies to the desk of a private secretary, and the irksome painful restraints of dependence.

Let me not by my statement of this event

appear to lay any thing to the charge of my ever dear and honoured father; if I were unnaturally disposed to find a fault in his proceeding upon this occasion, I must search for it amongst his virtues; he was open, warm and unsuspecting; apt to credit others for what was natural to himself, ever inclined to look only on the best side of men and things, and certainly not one of the children of this world. If I have cause to regret this departure from the line, in which by education I had been trained, I am the author of my own misfortune; I was perfectly a free agent, and have nobody but myself to accuse. My youth however, and the still unsettled state of my health spared me for a time, and my father proposed an excursion to the city of York for the double purpose of my relaxation and my sisters' accomplishments in music and dancing. We had a near relation living there, a widow lady, niece to Doctor Bentley, who accommodated us with her house, and we passed half a year in the society and amusements of the place. This lady, Forster by name, and first cousin to my mother, was a woman of superior understanding; her opinions were pronounced authorita-

tively and without respect of person; they were considered in York as little less than oracular. The style of living in this place was so new to me and out of character, when contrasted by the habits of study and retirement, which I had been accustomed to, that it seemed to enfeeble and depress that portion of genius, which nature had endowed me with; I hunted in the mornings, danced in the evenings, and devoted but a small portion of my time to any thing that deserved the name of study. I had no books of my own, and unfortunately got engaged with Spenser's Fairy Queen, in imitation of which I began to string nonsensical stanzas to the same rhyming kind of measure. Though I trust I should not have surrendered myself for any length of time to this jingling strain of obsolete versification, yet I am indebted to my mother for the seasonable contempt she threw upon my imitations, felt the force of her reproof, and laid the Fairy Queen upon its shelf.

The Earl of Galloway, father of the present Lord, was then residing at York with his family; a beautiful copy of elegiac verses, the composition of his daughter Lady Susan, was

communicated to me, of which the hint seemed to be taken from Hamlet's meditations on the skull of Yorick. I do not feel myself at liberty to publish the elegant poem of that lady, who lived to grace the high station which by her birth, virtues, and endowments she was entitled to, and when I now venture to insert my own, I am fully conscious how ill it would endure a comparison with that, which gave occasion to it—

"True! We must all be chang'd by death,
"Such is the form the dead must wear,
"And so, when Beauty yields its breath,
"So shall the fairest face appear.

"But let thy soul survey the grace,
"That yet adorns its frail abode,
"And through the wond'rous fabric trace
"The hand of an unerring God.

"Why does the blood in stated round
"Its vital warmth throughout dispense?
"Who tun'd the ear to every sound,
"And lent the hand its ready sense?

"Whence had the eyes that subtle force,
"That languor, they by turns display?
"Who hung the lips with prompt discourse,
"And tun'd the soft melodious lay?

" What but thy Maker's image there
" In each external part is seen?
" But 'tis thy better part to wear
" His image pictur'd best within.

" Else what avail'd the raptur'd strain,
" Did not the mind her aid impart,
" The melting eye would speak in vain,
" Flow'd not its language from the heart.

" The blood with stated pace had crept
" Along the dull and sluggish veins,
" The ear insensibly had slept,
" Though angels sung in choicest strains.

" It is that spark of quick'ning fire,
" To every child of nature giv'n,
" That either kindles wild desire,
" Or lights us on the road to heav'n.

" That spark, if Virtue keeps it bright,
" And Genius fans it into flame,
" Aspiring mounts, and in its flight,
" Soars far above this earthly frame.

" Strong and expansive in its view,
" It tow'rs amidst the boundless sky,
" Sees planets other orbs pursue,
" Whose systems other suns supply.

" Such Newton was, diffusing far
" His radiant beams; such Cotes had been,
" This a bright comet; that a star,
" Which glitter'd, and no more was seen.

" Blush then, if thou hast sense of shame,
" Inglorious, ign'rant, impious slave!
" Who think'st this heav'n-created frame
" Shall basely perish in the grave.

" False as thou art, dar'st thou suggest
" That thy Creator is unjust?
" Wilt thou the truth with Him contest,
" Whose wisdom form'd thee of the dust?

" Say, dotard, hath He idly wrought,
" Or are his works to be believ'd?
" Speak, is the whole creation nought?
" Mortal, is God or thou deceiv'd?

" Thy harden'd spirit, convict at last,
" Its damning error shall perceive,
" Speechless shall hear its sentence past,
" Condemn'd to tremble and believe.

" But thou in reason's sober light
" Death clad with terror can'st survey,
" And from the foul and ghastly sight
" Derive the pure and moral lay.

" Go on, sweet Nymph, and when thy Muse
" Visits the dark and dreary tomb,
" Bright-rob'd Religion shall diffuse
" Her radiance, and dispel the gloom.

" And when the necessary day
" Shall call thee to thy saving God,
" Secure thou'lt chuse that better way,
" Which Conscience points and Saints have trode.

" So shall thy soul at length forsake
" The fairest form e'er soul receiv'd,
" Of those rich blessings to partake,
" Which eye ne'er saw, nor heart conceiv'd.

" There, 'midst the full angelic throng,
" Praise Him, who those rich blessings gave,
" There shall resume the grateful song,
" A joyful victor o'er the grave."

This excursion to York was indeed a relaxation, but not altogether of a sort, that either suited my case, or accorded with my taste. Certain it is I had for a time impaired my health by too much application and the over-abstemious habits I imposed upon myself during my last year at college, but tranquillity not dissipation, or what is called amusement, was the restorative I most needed. The allure-

ments of public assemblies and the society of those, who resort to them, form so great a contrast to the occupations of a student, that instead of being enlivened by the change, I felt a lassitude of mind, that put me out of humour with myself, and damped that ardent spirit of acquirement, which in my nature seemed to have been its ruling passion. Extremes of any sort are dangerous to youthful minds, and should be studiously avoided. The termination of our visit to York, and the prospect of returning to college were welcomed by me most cordially. I had brought no books with me to York, and of course had nothing to call off my mind from the listless idle style, in which I dangled away my time, amusing myself only now and then with my pen, because my fancy would not be totally unemployed; sometimes, as I have before related, imitating Spenser's style, and at other times composing short elegies after the manner of Hammond; for this, when I was reprimanded by the same judicious monitress, who rallied me out of my imitations of the stanzas of The Fairy Queen, I promised her I would write no more love

elegies, and took leave of Hammond with the following lines, written almost extempore—

"When wise men love they love to folly,
"When blockheads love they're melancholy,
"When coxcombs love, they love for fashion,
"And quaintly call it the belle passion.

"Old bachelors, who wear the willow,
"May dream of love and hug the pillow,
"Whilst love, in poet's fancy rhyming,
"Sets all the bells of folly chiming.

"But women, charming women, prove
"The sweet varieties of love,
"They can love all, but none too dearly,
"Their husbands too, but not sincerely.

"They'll love a thing, whose outward shape
"Marks him twin brother to an ape;
"They'll take a miser for his riches,
"And wed a beggar without breeches.

"Marry, as if in love with ruin,
"A gamester to their sure undoing,
"A drunkard raving, swearing, storming,
"For the dear pleasure of reforming.

"They'll wed a lord, whose breath shall falter
"Whilst he is crawling from the altar:
"What is there women will not do,
"When they love man and money too?"

These and numerous trifles of the like sort, not worth recording, amused my vacant hours at York, but when I returned home, I made a very short stay and hastened to college, where I was soon invited to the master's lodge by Doctor Smith, who was pleased to honour me with his approbation of my past exertions, and imparted to me a new arrangement, that he and the seniors had determined upon for annulling so much of the existing statutes as restricted all Bachelors of Arts, except those of the third year's standing, from offering themselves candidates for fellowships: when he had signified this to me, he kindly added, that as I should be in the second year of my degree at the next election, he recommended it to me by all means to present myself for examination, and to take my chance. This was a communication so flattering, that I knew not how to shape the answer, which he seemed to expect from me; I clearly saw that his meaning was to bring me into the society a year before any one had been elected since the statutes were in existence; I knew that by my election there must be an exclusion of some candidate of the year above me, who had

only a single chance, whereas I had a double one; in the mean time my circumstances were such as not to want the emoluments of a fellowship, and my age such as might well admit of a postponement. These were my reflections at the time, and I felt the force of them, but the regulation was gone forth, and there were others of my own year, who had announced their resolution of coming forward as candidates at the time of the election. There was no part therefore for me to take but to prepare myself for the examination, and expect the result. To this I looked forward with much more terror and alarm, than to all I had experienced in the schools and theatre, for I not only stood in awe of the master of Trinity, as being the deepest mathematician of his time, but as I had reason to believe he had been led to lay open the election in some degree on my account, I apprehended he would never suffer his partiality to single me out to the exclusion of any other without strict scrutiny into my pretensions, and as I had obtained a high honour when I took my degree, I greatly feared he might expect too much, and meet with disappointment.

Under these impressions, whilst I was preparing to resume my studies with increased attention, and repair the time not profitably past of late, I received a summons, which opened to me a new scene of life. I was called for by Lord Halifax to assume the situation of his private confidential secretary: it was considered by my family and the friends and advisers of my family, as an offer, upon which there could be no hesitation. They took the question as it struck them in their view of it, they could not look into futurity, neither could they take a perfect estimate either of my fitness for the situation held out to me, or of the eventual value of the situation, from which I was about to be displaced. What the prosecution of my studies might have led me to in that line of life, to which I had directed my attention, and fixed my attachment, is a matter of speculation and conjecture; what I might have avoided is now become matter of experience, and I can only say that had certain passages of my past life been then stated to me as probabilities to occur, I would have stuck to my college, and endeavoured to have trodden in the steps of my ancestors.

I was not fitted for dependence; my nature was repugnant to it; I was most unfortunately formed with feelings, that could ill endure the assumed importance of some, or submit to take advantage of the weakness of others. I had ambition enough, and it may be more than enough; but it was the ambition of working out my own way by the labours of my mind, and raising to myself a character upon a foundation of my own laying. I certainly do not offend against truth when I say I had an ardent wish to earn a name in literature: I had studied books; I had not studied men, and perhaps I was too much disposed to measure my respect for their characters by the standard of their talents. I had no acquaintance with the noble Lord, who now invited me to share his confidence, and receive my destiny from his hands. My good father did what was perfectly natural for a father to do in the like circumstances, he availed himself of the opportunity for placing me under the patronage of one of the most figuring and rising men of his time. There was something extremely brilliant and more than commonly engaging in the person, manners and address of the Earl

of Halifax. He had been educated at Eton, and came with the reputation of a good scholar to Trinity College, where he established himself in the good opinion of the whole society, not only by his orderly and regular conduct, but in a very distinguished manner by the attention which he paid to his studies, and the proofs he gave in his public exercises of his classical acquirements. He was certainly, when compared with men of his condition, to be distinguished as a scholar much above the common mark: he quoted well and copiously from the best authors, chiefly Horace; he was very fond of English poetry, and recited it very emphatically after the manner of Quin, who had been his master in that art: he had a partiality for Prior, which he seemed to inherit from the celebrated Lord Halifax, and would rehearse long passages from his Solomon, and Henry and Emma, with the whole of his verses, beginning with *Sincere oh tell me*—and these he would set off with a great display of action, and in a style of declamation more than sufficiently theatrical. He was married to a virtuous and exemplary lady, who brought him a considerable fortune, and from

whom he took the name of Dunk, and was made a freeman of London to entitle him to marry in conformity to the conditions of her father's will. His family, when I came to him, consisted of this lady, with whom he lived in great domestic harmony, and three daughters; there was an elderly clergyman of the name of Crane, an inmate also, who had been his tutor, and to whom he was most entirely attached. A better guide and a more faithful counsellor he could not have, for amongst all the men it has been my chance to know, I do not think I have known a calmer, wiser, more right-headed man; in the ways of the world, the politics of the time and the characters of those, who were in the public management and responsibility of affairs, Doctor Crane was incomparably the best steersman, that his pupil could take his course from, and so long as he submitted to his temperate guidance he could hardly go astray. The opinions of Doctor Crane were upon all points decisive, because in the first place they were always withheld till extorted from him by appeal, and secondly, because they never failed to carry home con-

viction of the prudence and sound judgment they were founded upon.

This was the state of the family to which I was now introduced. In the Lord of the house I contemplated a man regular in his duties, temperate in his habits, and a strict observer of decorum: in the lady a woman, in whom no fault or even foible could be discovered, mild, prudent, unpretending! in the tutor a character not easy to develope, or rightly and correctly to appretiate, for whilst his qualities commanded respect, the dryness of his external repulsed familiarity; in short I set him down as a man of a clear head and a cold heart: the daughters were children of the nursery.

I went to town attended by a steady and intelligent servant of my father's; this person, Anthony Fletcher by name, who then wore a livery, has since, by a series of good conduct and good fortune, established himself in an affluent and creditable situation at Bath, where he still lives in a very advanced age in the Crescent, well known and universally respected. Lord Halifax's house was in Grosvenor-Square, but I found lodgings taken for me by his order in Downing-Street, for the purpose,

as I understood, of my being near Mr. John Pownall, then acting secretary to the Board of Trade, at which it was Lord Halifax's office to preside. This gentleman was to give me the necessary instructions for my obtaining some insight into the nature of the business, likely to devolve upon me. My location was certainly very well pitched for those communications, for Mr. Pownall lodged and boarded at a house in the same street, and with him I was to mess when not invited out.

The morning after my arrival I waited on this gentleman at his office in Whitehall, and was received by him with all possible politeness, but in a style of such ceremony and form as I was little used to, and not much delighted with. How many young men at my time of life would have embraced this situation with raptnre! The whole town indeed was before me, but it had not for me either friend or relation, to whom I could resort for comfort or for counsel. With a head filled with Greek and Latin, and a heart left behind me in my college, I was completely out of my element. I saw myself unlike the people about me, and was embarrassed in circles, which according to

the manners of those days were not to be approached without a set of ceremonies and manœuvres, not very pleasant to perform, and, when awkwardly performed, not very edifying to behold. In these graces Lord Halifax was a model; his address was noble and impressive; he could never be mistaken for less than he was, whilst his official Secretary Pownall, who egregiously over-acted his imitations of him, could as little be mistaken for more than he was. In the world, which I now belonged to, I heard very little, except now and then a quotation from Lord Halifax, that in any degree interested me; there were talkers however, who would take possession of a subject as a highwayman does of a purse, without knowing what it contained, or caring whom it belonged to; many of these gentlemen had doubtless found that ignorance had been no obstacle to their advancement, and now they seemed resolved it should be no bar to their assurance. I found there was a polite as well as a political glossary, which involved mysteries little less obscure than those, which are couched under the hieroglyphics of Egypt, and I perceived that whosoever had the ready use

and apt application of those pass-words, was by right looked up to as the best bred and best informed man in the company: when a single word can comprise the matter of a whole volume, those worthy gentlemen have a very sufficient plea for not wasting their time upon reading. I have lived long enough to witness such amazing feats performed by impudence, that I much wonder why modest men will allow themselves to be found in societies, where they are condemned to be annoyed by talkers, who turn all things upside down, whilst they are not permitted to utter that, which would set them right.

When it was my chance to dine at our boarding-house table with the aforementioned subsecretary, I contemplated with surprise the importance of his air, and the dignity that seemed attached to his official situation. The good woman of the house, who was at once our provider and our president, regularly addressed him by the name of statesman, and in her distribution of the joint shewed something more than an impartial attention to his plate. If he knew any state-secrets, I will do him the justice to say that he never disclosed them; and

if he talked *with* ministers and great nobles as he talked *of* them, I will venture to say he was extremely familiar with them; and I cannot doubt but that this was the case; for if he was thus high with his equals, it surely behoved him to be much higher with those who but for such self-swelling altitudes might stand a chance to pass for his superiors. He had a brother in the guards, a very amiable man, and with him I formed a friendship. Having been told to inform myself about the colonies, and shewn some folio books of formidable contents, I began *more meo* with the discoverers of America, and proceeded to travel through a mass of voyages, which furnished here and there some plots for tragedies, dumb shows and dances, as they have since done, but in point of information applicable to the then existing state of the colonies, were most discouragingly meagre, and most oppressively tedious in communicating nothing. I got a summary but sufficient insight into the constitutions of the respective provinces, for what was worth knowing was soon learnt, and when I found that my whole employment in Grosvenor-Square consisted in copying a few pri-

vate letters to governors and civil officers abroad, I applied my thoughts to other subjects, and particularly to the approaching election at my college; still London lodgings and London hours were not quite so well adapted to study as I could have wished, though I changed my situation for the better when I removed to an apartment, which was taken for me in Mount-Street, within a very short walk of Lord Halifax's house, where I attended for his commands every morning, and dined twice or thrice in the week. One day he took me with him to Newcastle House, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, for the purpose of presenting me to the duke, then prime minister: his lordship was admitted without delay; I waited two hours for my audience, and was then dismissed in two minutes, whilst his grace, stript to his shirt with his sleeves rolled up to his elbows, was washing his hands.

The recess took place at the usual time, when Lord Halifax left town and went to Horton in Northamptonshire; I accompanied him thither, and from thence went to Cambridge; he seemed interested in my undertaking, and offered me letters of recommendation, which

with due acknowledgments I declined. On my arrival I found Doctor Richard Bentley had come from his living of Nailstone in Leicestershire, purposely to support my cause; the vice-master also welcomed me with his accustomed cordiality, and I found the candidates of both years had turned out strong for the contest. There were six vacancies, and six candidates of the year above me; of these Spencer Madan, now Bishop of Peterborough, was as *senior Westminster* secure of his election, and such was his merit, independent of any other claim, that it would have been impossible to pass him over. He was a young man of elegant accomplishments, and with the recommendation of a very interesting person and address, had derived from the Cowpers, of which family his mother was, no small proportion of hereditary taste and talent; he was a good classical scholar, composed excellent declamations in the Ciceronian style, which he set off with all the grace of recitation and voice, that can well be conceived: he had a great passion for music, sung well, and read in chapel to the admiration of every one. I have passed many happy hours with him in the

morning of our lives, and I hope he will enjoy the evening of his days in comfort and tranquillity, having chosen that better lot, which has brought him into harbour, whilst I, who lost it, am left out at sea.

The senior Westminster of my year, and joint candidate with me at this time, was John Higgs, now Rector of Grandisburgh in Suffolk, and a senior fellow of Trinity College; a man, who, when I last visited him, enjoyed all the vigour of mind and body in a green old age, the result of good humour, and the reward of temperance. We have spun out mutually a long measure of uninterrupted friendship, he in peace throughout, and I at times in perplexity; and if I survive to complete these memoirs, and he to read this page, I desire he will receive it as a testimony of my unaltered regard for him through life, and the bequest of my last good wishes at the close of it.

It would hardly be excusable in me to detail a process, that takes place every year, but that in this instance the novelty of our case made it matter of very general attention. When the day of examination came we went our rounds to the electing seniors; in some instances by

one at a time, in others by parties of three or four; it was no trifling scrutiny we had to undergo, and here and there pretty severely exacted, particularly, as I well remember, by Doctor Charles Mason, a man of curious knowledge in the philosophy of mechanics and a deep mathematician; he was a true modern Diogenes in manners and apparel, coarse and slovenly to excess in both; the witty made a butt of him, but the scientific caressed him; he could ornament a subject at the same time that he disgusted and disgraced society. I remember when he came one day to dinner in the college hall, dirty as a blacksmith from his forge, upon his being questioned on his appearance, he replied—that he had been *turning*—then I wish, said the other, when you was about it, friend Charles, you had *turned* your shirt. This philosopher, as I was prepared to believe, decidedly opposed my election. He gave us a good dose of dry mathematics, and then put an Aristophanes before us, which he opened at a venture, and bade us give the sense of it. A very worthy candidate of my year declined having any thing to do with it, yet Mason gave his vote for that

gentleman, and against me, who took his leavings. Doctor Samuel Hooper gave us a liberal and well chosen examination in the more familiar classics; that indeed was a man, in whom nothing could be found but what was gentle and engaging, whom suavity of temper and the charms of manners made dear to all that knew him; he died and was buried in the chapel of his college, where a marble tablet, erected to his memory, cannot fail to awaken the sensibility of all, who like me, were acquainted with his virtues.

The last, whom in order of our visits we resorted to, was the master; he called us to him one by one according to our standings, and of course it fell to me as junior candidate to wait till each had been examined in his turn. When in obedience to his summons I attended upon him, he was sitting, not in the room where my grandfather had his library, but in a chamber up stairs, encompassed with large folding screens, and over a great fire, though the weather was then uncommonly warm: he began by requiring of me an account of the whole course and progress of my studies in the several branches of philosophy, so called in the

general, and as I proceeded in my detail of what I had read, he sifted me with questions of such a sort as convinced me he was determined to take nothing upon trust; when he had held me a considerable time under this examination, I expected he would have dismissed me, but on the contrary he proceeded in the like general terms to demand of me an account of what I had been reading before I had applied myself to academical studies, and when I had acquitted myself of this question as briefly as I could, and I hope as modestly as became me in presence of a man so learned, he bade me give him a summary account of the several great empires of the ancient world, the periods when they flourished, their extent when at the summit of their power, the causes of their declension and dates of their extinction. When summoned to give answer to so wide a question, I can only say it was well for me I had worked so hard upon my scheme of General History, which I have before made mention of, and which, though not complete in all the points of his enquiry, supplied me with materials for such a detail, as seemed to give him more than tolerable satisfaction. This process

being over, he gave me a sheet of paper written through in Greek with his own hand, which he ordered me to turn either into Latin or English, and I was shewn into a room, containing nothing but a table furnished with materials for writing, and one chair, and I was required to use dispatch. The passage was maliciously enough selected in point of construction, and also of character, for he had scrawled it out in a puzzling kind of hand with abbreviations of his own devising: it related to the arrangement of an army for battle, and I believe might be taken from Polybius, an author I had then never read. When I had given in my translation in Latin, I was remanded to the empty chamber with a subject for Latin prose and another for Latin verse, and again required to dispatch them in the manner of an impromptu. The chamber, into which I was shut for the performance of these hasty productions, was the very room, dismantled of the bed, in which I was born. The train of ideas it revived in my mind were not inappositely woven into the verses I gave in, and with this task my examination concluded.

Doctor Smith, who so worthily succeeded to the mastership of Trinity on my grandfather's decease, was unquestionably one of the most learned men of his time, as his works, especially his System of Optics, effectually demonstrate. He led the life of a student, abstemious and recluse, his family consisting of a sister, advanced in years, and unmarried like himself, together with a niece, who in the course of her residence there was married to a fellow of the college. He was a man, of whom it might be said—Philosophy *had marked him for her own*; of a thin spare habit, a nose prominently aquiline, and an eye penetrating as that of the bird, the semblance of whose beak marked the character of his face: the tone of his voice was shrill and nasal, and his manner of speaking such as denoted forethought and deliberation. How deep a theorist he was in harmony his treatise will evince; of mere melody he was indignantly neglectful, and could not reconcile his ear to the harpsichord, till by a construction of his own he had divided the half tones into their proper flats and sharps. Those who figured to themselves a Diogenes in Mason, might have fancied they beheld an

Aristotle in Smith, who, had he lived in the age and fallen within the eye of the great designer of The School of Athens, might have left his image there without discrediting the groupe.

The next day the election was announced, and I was chosen together with Mr. John Orde, now one of the masters in Chancery, who was of the same year with myself, and next to me upon the list of *Wranglers*. This gentleman had also gained the prize adjudged to him for his Latin declamation; for his private worthiness he was universally esteemed, and for his public merits deservedly rewarded. By our election two candidates of the year above us for ever lost their chance; the one of these a Mr. Briggs, the other Mr. Penneck, a name well known and a character much esteemed: he filled a situation in the British Museum with great respectability, was a very amiable worthy man, highly valued by his friends when living, and much lamented after death. His disappointment on this occasion was very generally regretted, and I think I can answer for the feelings of Mr. Orde as confidently as for my own.

When I waited upon the electing seniors to return my thanks, of course I did not omit to pay my compliments to Doctor Mason. —"You owe me no compliment, he replied, "for I tell you plainly I opposed your election, "not because I have any personal objection to "you, but because I am no friend to innova- "tions, and think it hard, upon the excluded "candidates to be subjected on a sudden to a "regulation, which according to my calcula- "tion gives you two chances to their one, and "takes away, as it has proved, even that one. "But you are in; so there's an end of it, and I "give you joy."

Having staid as long in college as in gratitude and propriety I conceived it right to stay, I went home to Stanwick, and from thence paid my duty in a short visit to Lord Halifax. This was certainly a moment, of which I could have availed myself for returning into the line of life, which I had stept out of, and as neither now, nor in any day of my long attendance upon Lord Halifax, there ever was an hour, when my father would not have lent a ready ear to my appeal, the reasons, that prevailed with me for persisting, were not dictated by him.

In the mean time the life I led in town during the first years of my attendance was almost as much sequestered from the world, as if I had been resident in college: in my lodging in Mount Street I had stocked myself with my own books, some of my father's, and those, which Doctor Richard Bentley had bestowed upon me; I sought no company, nor pushed for any new connexions amongst those, whom I occasionally met in Grosvenor-Square; one or two of my fellow collegiates now and then looked in upon me, and about this time I made my first small offering to the press, following the steps of Gray with another church-yard elegy, written on Saint Mark's eve, when according to rural tradition the ghosts of those, who are to die within the year ensuing, are seen to walk at midnight across the church-yard. I believe the public were very little interested by my plaintive ditty, and Mr. Dodsley, who was publisher, as little profited. I had written it at Stanwick in one of my college vacations, some time before I belonged to Lord Halifax, and had affixed to my title page the following motto with which I sent it into the world—

" Διὸς δέ τοι ἄγγελος εἰμι,
" Ὅς σευ, ἄνευθεν ἰὼν, μίγα κήδεται, ἠδ' ἐλεαίρει·
" ——ἀλλὰ σὺ σῇσιν ἔχε φρεσὶ, μηδέ σε λήθῃ
" Αἰρείτω, εὖτ' ἄν σε μελίφρων ὕπνος ἀνήῃ."

I had made my stay at Horton as short as I could with propriety, being impatient to avail myself of every day that I could pass in the society of my family. With them I was happy; in their company I enjoyed those tranquil and delicious hours, which were endeared to me still more by the contrast of what I suffered when in absence from them.

With all these sensations within me, these filial feelings and family attachment, I hardly need confess, that, however time and experience may have changed my taste or capacity for public life, certain it is that I was not then fitted for it, nor had any of those worldly qualities and accommodations in my nature, which are sure to push their possessors into notice, and form what may be called the very *nidus* of good fortune. A man, who is gifted with these lucky talents, is armed with hands, as a ship with grappling irons, ready to catch hold of, and make himself fast to every thing he comes in contact with; and such a man, with

all these properties of adhesion, has also the property, like the Polipus, of a most miraculous and convenient indivisibility; cut off his hold, nay, cut him how you will, he is still a Polipus, whole and entire. Men of this sort shall work their way out of their obscurity like cockroaches out of the hold of a ship, and crawl into notice, nay, even into king's palaces, as the frogs did into Pharoah's: the happy faculty of noting times and seasons, and a lucky promptitude to avail themselves of moments with address and boldness, are alone such all-sufficient requisites, such marketable stores of worldly knowledge, that although the minds of those, who own them, shall be as to all the liberal sciences a *rasa tabula*, yet knowing these things needful to be known, let their difficulties and distresses be what they may, though the storm of adversity threatens to overwhelm them, they are in a life-boat, buoyed up by corks, and cannot sink. These are the stray children turned loose upon the world, whom fortune in her charity takes charge of, and for whose guidance in the bye-ways and cross-roads of their pilgrimage she sets up fairy finger-posts, discoverable by them,

whose eyes are near the ground, but unperceived by such, whose looks are raised above it.

In a nation, like this, where all ranks and degrees are laid open to enterprize, merit or good fortune, it is fit, right and natural that sudden elevations should occur and be encouraged. It is a spur to industry, and incites to emulation and laudable ambition. Whilst it leads to these good consequences, it must also tend to others of a different sort. In all communities so constituted there will be a secret market for cunning, as well as a fair emporium for honesty, and a vast body of men, who can't support themselves without labour of some sort, and won't live by the labour of their hands, must contrive to live by their wits——

Honest men
Are the soft easy cushions, on which knaves
Repose and fatten——

But there are more than these—Vain men will have their flatterers, rich men their followers, and powerful men their dependants. A great man in office is like a great whale in the ocean; there will be a sword-fish and a thresher, a Junius and a John Wilkes, ever in

his wake and arming to attack him: These are the vext spirits of the deep, who trouble the waters, turning them up from the very bottom, that they may emerge from their mud, and float upon the surface of the billows in foam of their making.

The abstract history of some of these gentry is curious—when they have made a wreck of their own reputation, they assault and tear in pieces the reputations of others; they defame man and blaspheme God; they are punished for their enormities; this makes them martyrs; martyrdom makes them popular, they are crowned with praises, honours and emoluments, and they leave the world in admiration of their talents, before they have tasted the contempt which they deserve.

But whilst these men may be said to fight their way into consequence, and so long as they can but live in notice are content to live in trouble, there is a vast majority of easy, unambitious, courteous humble servants, whose unoffending vanity aspires no higher than like Samson's bees to make honey in the bowels of a lion, and fatten on the offal of a rich man's superfluities. They ask no more of fortune

than to float, like the horse dung with the apples, and enjoy the credit of good company as they travel down the smooth and easy stream of life. For these there is a vast demand, and their talents are as various as the uses they are put to. Every great, rich and consequential man, who has not the wisdom to hold his tongue, must enjoy his privilege of talking, and there must be dull fellows to listen to him; again, if, by talking about what he does not understand, he gets into embarrassments, there must be clever fellows to help him out of them: when he would be merry, there must be witty rogues to make him laugh; when he would be sorrowful, there must be sad rogues to sigh and groan and make long faces: as a great man must be never in the wrong, there must be hardy rascals, who will swear he is always in the right; as he must never show fear, of course he must never see danger; and as his courage must at no time sink, there must be friends at all times ready to prevent its being tried.

A great man is entitled to his relaxations; he, who labours for the public, must recreate his spirit with his private friends: then it is

that the happy moments, the *mollia tempora* are to be found, which the adept in the art of rising knows so well how to make his use of. Of opportunities like these I have had my share; I never turned them to my own advantage; if at any time I undertook a small solicitation, or obtruded a request, it was for some humble client, who told a melancholy tale, and could advance no nearer to the principal than by making suit to me; in the mean time I saw many a favour wrested by importunity out of that course, which I had reason to expect they would have taken: I never remonstrated, and a very slight apology sufficed for me. These negative merits I may fairly claim without offence against the modesty of truth; I was assiduous in discharging all the duties of my small employ, and faithfully attached to my employer: if he had no call upon me for more or greater services than any man of the commonest capacity could have performed, it was because occasions did not occur; I had not the fault of neglecting what I had to do, nor the presumption of dictating in any single instance what should be done.

Lord Halifax wrote all his own dispatches,

and with reason, for he wrote well; but I am tempted to record one opportunity, that was thrown in my way by the candour of Mr. Charles Townshend, whilst he was passing a few days at Horton; amongst a variety of subjects, which his active imagination was for ever starting, something had recurred to his recollection of an enigmatical sort, that he wished to have the solution of, and could not strike upon it; it was only to be done by a geometrical process, which I was fortunate enough to hit upon; I worked it as a problem and gave him my solution in writing; I believe it pleased him, but I am very sure that his good nature was glad of the opportunity to say flattering things to a diffident young man, who said very little for himself, and further to do me grace he was pleased to put into my hands a very long and elaborate report of his own drawing up, for he was then one of the Lords of Trade, and this he condescended to desire I would carefully revise and give him my remarks without reserve. How highly I was gratified by this condescension in a man of his extraordinary and superior genius, I need not say, nor

how well, or how ill, I executed my commission; I did it to the best of my abilities; there was much to admire, and something here and there in his paper to warrant a remark; if his compliments were sincere, I succeeded, and shortly after I had proofs, that put his kind opinion of me out of doubt.

One morning in conversation tete-à-tete, he said he recollected a quotation he had chanced upon in an anonymous author, who maintained opinions of a very impious sort.—The passage he repeated is as follows—

Post mortem nihil est, ipsaq; mors nihil—

And he asked me if I knew where those words were to be found: I recollected them to be in one of the tragedies of Seneca, I believed it was that of the Troades, which I had lately chanced upon amongst my grandfather's books: as soon as I had access to these, I turned to the passage, and according to his desire copied and inclosed it to him. 'Tis found in the second act of the Troades, and as it is a curious extract, and short withal, I have inserted it, together with the stanzas written at

the time and transmitted with it, which, though not very closely translated, I have transcribed verbatim as I find them.

Verum est, an timidos fabula decipit
Umbras corporibus vivere conditis?
Cum conjux oculis imposuit manum,
Supremusq; dies solibus obstitit,
Et tristes cineres urna coercuit,
Non prodest animam tradere funeri,
Sed restat miseris vivere longius,
An toti morimur, nullaq; pars manet
Nostri, cum profugo spiritus halitu
Immixtus nebulis cessit in aera,
Et nudum tetigit subdita fax latus—?
Quidquid sol oriens, quidquid et occidens
Novit, cærulei oceanus fretis
Quidquid vel ventens vel fugiens lavat,
Ætas pegaseo corripiet gradu.
Quo bissena volant sidera turbine,
Quo cursu properat secula volvere
Astrorum dominus, quo properat modo
Obliquis Hecate currere flexubus,
Hoc omnes petimus fata; nec amplius
Juratos Superis qui tetigit lacus
Usquam est: ut calidis fumus ab ignibus
Vanescit, spatium per breve sordidus,
Ut nubes gravidas, quas modo vidimus,
Arctoi Boreæ dissicit impetus,
Sic hic, quo regimur, spiritus effluet.
Post mortem nihil est, ipsaq; mors nihil;

Velocis spatii meta novissima.
Spem ponant avidi, solliciti metum!
Quæris quo jaccas post obitum loco—?
Quo non nata jacent.
Tempus nos avidum devorat, et chaos:
Mors individua est; noxia corpori,
Nec parcens animæ. Ticnara, et aspero
Regnum sub domino, limen et obsidens
Custos non facili Cerberus ostio,
Rumores vacui, verbaq; inania,
Et par sollicito fabula somnio.

Chorus of Trojan Women.

"Is it a truth, or fiction all,
"Which only cowards trust,
"Shall the soul live beyond the grave,
"Or mingle with our dust?

"When the last gleam of parting day
"Our struggling sight hath blest,
"And in the pale array of death
"Our clay-cold limbs are drest.

"Did the kind friend, who clos'd our eyes,
"Speak peace to us in vain?
"Is there no peace, and have we died
"To live and weep again?

"Or sigh'd we then our souls away,
"And was that sigh our last,
"Or o'er upon the flaming pile
"Our bare remains were cast?

"All the sun sees, the ocean laves,
"Kingdoms and kings shall fall,
"Nature and nature's works shall cease,
"And time be lord of all.

"Swift as the monarch of the skies
"Impels the rolling year,
"Swift as the gliding orb of night
"Pursues her prone career,

"So swift, so sure we all descend
"Down life's continual tide,
"'Till in the void of fate profound
"We sink with worlds beside.

"As in the flame's resistless glare
"Th' envelop'd smoke is lost,
"Or as before the driving North
"The scatter'd clouds are tost,

"So this proud vapour shall expire,
"This all-directing soul,
"Nothing is after death; you've run
"Your race and reach'd the goal.

"Dare not to wish, nor dread to meet
"A life beyond the grave;
"You'll meet no other life than now
"The unborn ages have.

"Time whelms us in the vast Inane,
"A gulph without a shore;
"Death gives th' exterminating blow,
"We fall to rise no more.

"Hell, and its triple-headed guard,
"And Lethe's fabled stream,
"Are tales that lying gossips tell,
"And moon-struck Sybils dream."

It was the good old custom of the Earl of Halifax to pass the Christmas at his family seat of Horton in great hospitality, and upon these occasions he never failed to be accompanied by parties of his friends and intimates from town; the chief of these were the Lords Dupplin and Barrington, Mr. Charles Townshend, Mr. Francis Fane, Mr. James Oswald, Mr. Hans Stanley, Mr. Narbonne Berkeley, Lord Hillsborough, Mr. Dodington, Colonel James Johnstone, the husband of his sister Lady Charlotte, and Mr. Ambrose Isted of Ecton, near Northampton, his neighbour and constant visitor at those seasons; these, with the addition of Doctor Crane and the Reverend Mr. Spencer, an elderly clergyman, long attached to the family, formed a society high-

ly respectable. I ever entertained a perfect and sincere regard for Lady Halifax; her mild complacent character was to me far more engaging than the livelier spirits and more figuring talents of many, who engrossed that attention, which she did not aspire to: she was uniform in her kindness to me, and whilst she lived, I flatter myself I had a friend, who esteemed and understood me: when she died I had more reason to regret her loss than for myself alone.

My father was still fixed in his residence at Stanwick, and there I ever found unvaried felicity, unabated affection. He had some excellent friends and many pleasant neighbours, with whom he lived upon the most agreeable terms, for in his house every body seemed to be happy; his table was admirably managed by my mother, his cellars, servants, equipage in the best order, and without parade unbecoming of his profession, or unsuitable to his fortune, no family could be better conducted; and here I must indulge myself in dilating on the character of one of his best friends, and best of men, Ambrose Isted, Esq. of Ecton aforementioned. Through every scene of my

life, from my childhood to the lamented event of his death, which happened whilst I was in Spain, he was invariably kind, indulgent and affectionate to me. I conceive there is not upon record one, who more perfectly fulfilled the true character of a country gentleman in all its most respectable duties and departments than did this exemplary person; nor will his name be forgotten in Northamptonshire so long as the memory or tradition of good deeds shall circulate, or gratitude be considered as a tribute due to the benevolent. He was the pattern and very model of hospitality most worthy to be copied; for his family and affairs were administered and conducted with such measured liberality, such correct and wise œconomy, that the friend, who found nothing wanting, which could constitute his comforts, found nothing wastefully superfluous to occasion his regret. Though Mr. Isted's estate was not large, yet by the process of inclosure, and above all by his prudent and well-ordered management, it was augmented without extortion, and left in excellent condition to his son and heir. The benefits he conferred upon his poorer neighbours were of a nature far su-

perior to the common acts of almsgiving (though these were not omitted) for in all their difficulties and embarrassments, he was their counsellor and adviser, not merely in his capacity of acting justice of the peace, but also from his legal knowledge and experience, which were very considerable, and fully competent to all their uses; by which numbers, who might else have fallen under the talons of country attornies, were saved from pillage and beggary. With this gentleman my father acted as justice, and was united in friendship and in party, and to him he resorted upon all occasions, where the opinion and advice of a judicious friend were wanted. Our families corresponded in the utmost harmony, and our interchange of visits was frequent and delightful. The house of Ecton was to me a second home, and the hospitable master of it a second father; his gaiety of heart, his suavity of temper, the interest he took in giving pleasure to his guests, and the fund of information he possessed in the stores of a well-furnished memory and a lively animated genius, are ever fresh in my recollection, and I look back upon the days I have passed with him as some of the happiest

in my life. For many years before his death, I saw this excellent man by intervals excruciated with a tormenting and incurable disease, which laid too deep and undiscoverable in his vitals to admit of any other relief than laudanum in large doses could at times administer: nothing but a soul serene and piously resigned as his was, could have borne itself up against a visitation at once so agonizing and so hopeless; a spirit however fortified by faith, and a conscience clear of reproach can effect great things, and my heroic friend through all his trials smiled in the midst of sufferings, and submitted unrepining to his fate. One of the last letters he lived to write I received in Spain: I saw it was the effort of an exhausted frame, a generous zeal to send one parting testimony of his affection to me, and being at that time myself extremely ill, I was hardly in a capacity to dictate a reply.

I was also at this time in habits of the most intimate friendship with two young men of my own age, sons of a worthy clergyman in our neighbourhood, the Reverend Mr. Ekins. Jeffery the elder, now deceased, was Dean of Carlisle, and Rector of Morpeth; John the

younger is yet living and Dean of Salisbury.—Few men have been more fortunate in life than these brothers, fewer still have probably so well deserved their good success. With the elder of these my intimacy was the greatest; the same passion for poetry possessed us both, the same attachment to the drama: our respective families indulged us in our propensities, and were mutually amused with our domestic exhibitions. My friend Jeffery was in my family, as I was in his, an inmate ever welcome; his genius was quick and brilliant, his temper sweet, and his nature mild and gentle in the extreme: I loved him as a brother; we never had the slightest jar, nor can I recollect the moment in our lives, that ever gave occasion of offence to either. Our destinations separated us in the more advanced period of our time; his duties drew him to a distance from the scenes I was engaged in; his lot was prosperous and placid, and well for him it was, for he was not made to combat with the storms of life. In early youth, long before he took orders, he composed a drama of an allegorical cast, which he entitled *Florio*, or *The Pursuit of Happiness*. There was a great deal of

fancy in it, and I wrote a comment upon it almost as long as the drama itself, which I sent to him as a mark of my admiration of his genius, and my affection for his person. He also wrote a poem upon *Dreams*, which had great merit, but as I wished my friend to employ his talents upon subjects of a more elevated nature, I addressed some lines to him in the style of remonstrance, of which I shall transcribe no more than the concluding stanza—

"— But thou, whose powers can wield a weightier theme,
"Why waste one thought upon an empty dream?
"Why all this genius, all this art display'd
"To paint a vapour and arrest a shade?
"Can fear-drawn shapes and visions of the night
"Assail thy fancy, or deceive thy sight?
"Wilt thou to air-built palaces resort,
"Where the sylphs flutter and the fairies sport.
"No, let them sooth the love-enfeebled brain,
"Thy Muse shall seize her harp and strike a loftier strain."

During the time I lived in this pleasing intercourse with the family of these worthy brothers, there was an ingenious friend and school fellow of their's pretty constantly resident with them, of the name of Arden, a young man very much to be loved for the amenity of

his temper and the vivacity of his parts. He was the life and soul of our dramatic amusements, and had an energy of character, as well as a fund of humour, that enabled him to give its true force and expression to every part he assumed in our private exhibitions. And here let me not omit to mention a near relation, and once my most dear friend, Richard, son of the Reverend Doctor George Reynolds, and grandson of Bishop Reynolds, who married the daughter of Bishop Cumberland.—This mild and amiable young man had in early life so far attached himself to the Earl of Sandwich, as to accompany him to the Congress at Aix-la-Chapelle, but being perfectly independent in his fortune and of an unambitious placid nature, he declined pursuing any further the unquiet track of public life, and sate down with his family at their house of Paxton in Huntingdonshire, to the possession of which he succeeded, and where he still resides. I am here speaking of the days of my intimacy with this gentleman, and I look back to them with none but grateful recollection; in the course of these memoirs I shall have to speak of other days, that will recall sensations of another sort.

If ever this once-valued friend shall be my reader, let me appeal to his candour for a fair interpretation of my feelings, when I cannot pass this period over without recalling to his memory and my own the name of his departed sister, who merited and possessed my best affections in their purest sense. The hospitable welcome I always received from the parents of this amiable lady, and their encouraging politeness to me might have tempted one less respectful of her comforts, and less sensible of her superior pretensions, to have presumed upon their favor and made tender of his addresses; but my precarious dependency and unsettled state of life, forbade such hopes, and I was silent. I now return to my narrative, in which I am prepared to speak both of others and myself no more than I know, or verily believe, to be truth.

It was about this time I employed myself in collecting materials from the History of India for the plan of a poem in heroic verse, many fragments of which I find amongst my old papers, which prove I had bestowed considerable labour on the work, and made some progress. Whether I found the plan could not be made

to accord to my idea of the epic, or whether any other project called me off I cannot now recollect; but at that time I had not attempted any thing professedly for the stage. I must however lament that it has lain by unlooked at for so great a length of time, as there have been intermediate periods of leisure when it would have been well worth my pains to have taken it up. It is now too late, and the only use I can apply it to is humbly to lay before the public a specimen, faithfully transcribed from that part of the poem, where the discoveries of the Portuguese are introduced. I might perhaps have selected passages less faulty, but I give it correctly as I find it, trusting that the candid reader will make allowances for that too florid style, which juvenile versifiers are so apt to indulge themselves in, whilst the fancy is too prurient and the judgment not mature.

* * *

Fragment.

" ——Long time had Afric's interposing mound,
" Stretching athwart the navigator's way,
" Fenc'd the rich East, and sent th' advent'rous bark
" Despairing home, or whelm'd her in the waves.

" Gama the first on bold discovery bent,
" With prow still pointing to the further pole,
" Skirted Caffraria till the welcome cape,
" Thence call'd of *Hope*—but not to Asia's sons—
" Spoke the long coast exhausted; still 'twas hope,
" Not victory; nature in one effort foil'd,
" Still kept the contest doubtful, and enrag'd,
" Rous'd all the elements to war. Meanwhile,
" As once the Titans with Saturnian Jove,
" So he in happier hour and his bold crew
" Undaunted conflict held: old Ocean storm'd,
" Loud thunder rent the air, the leagued winds
" Roar'd in his front, as if all Afric's Gods
" With necromantic spells had charm'd the storm
" To shake him from his course—in vain; for Fate,
" That grasp'd his helm with unrelenting hand,
" Had register'd his triumph: through the breach
" All Lusitania pour'd; Arabia mourn'd,
" And saw her spicy caravans return
" Shorn of their wealth; the Adriatic bride
" Like a neglected beauty pin'd away;
" Europe, which by her hand of late receiv'd
" India's rich fruits, from the deserted mart
" Now turn'd aside and pluckt them as they grew.
" A new-found world from out the waves arose.
" Now Soffala, and all the swarming coast
" Of fruitful Zanguebar, till where it meets
" The sultry Line, pour'd forth their odorous stores.
" The thirsty West drank deep the luscious draught,
" And reel'd with luxury; Emmanuel's throne
" Blaz'd with barbaric gems; aloft he sate

" Encanopied with gold, and circled round
" With warriors and with chiefs in Eastern pomp
" Resplendent with their spoils. Close in the rear
" Of conquest march'd the motley papal host,
" Monks of all colours, brotherhoods and names:
" Frowning they rear'd the cross; th' affrighted tribes
" Look'd up aghast, and whilst the cannon's mouth
" Thunder'd obedience, dropt th' unwilling knee
" In trembling adoration of a God,
" Whom, as by nature tutor'd, in his works
" They saw, and only in his mercy knew.
" But creeds, imposed by terror, can ensure
" No fixt allegiance, but are strait dismiss'd
" From the vext conscience, when the sword is sheath'd.
" Now when the barrier, that so long had stood
" 'Twixt the disparted nations, was no more,
" Like fire, once kindled, spreading in its course,
" Onward the mighty conflagration roll'd.
" As if the Atlantic and the Southern seas,
" Driv'n by opposing winds and urg'd amain
" By fierce tornadoes, with their cumbrous weight
" Should on a sudden at the narrowing pass
" Of Darien burst the continental chain
" And whelm together, so the nations rush'd
" Impetuous through the breach, where Gama forc'd
" His desperate passage; terrible the shock,
" From Ormus echoing to the Eastern isles
" Of Java and Sumatra; India now
" From th' hither Tropic to the Southern Cape
" Show'd to the setting sun a shore of blood:
" In vain her monarchs from a hundred thrones

" Sounded the arbitrary word for war;
" In vain whole cataracts of dusky slaves
" Pour'd on the coast: earth trembled with the weight;
" But what can slaves? What can the nerveless arm,
" Shrunk by that soft emasculating clime,
" What the weak dart against the mailed breast
" Of Europe's martial sons? On sea, on shore
" Great Almeed triumph'd, and the rival sword
" Of Albuquerque, invincible in arms,
" Wasted the nations, humbling to the yoke
" Kings, whom submissive myriads in the dust
" Prostrate ador'd, and from the solar blaze
" Of majesty retreating veil'd their eyes.
" As when a roaming vulture on the wing
" From Mauritania or the cheerless waste
" Of sandy Thibet, by keen hunger prest,
" With eye quick glancing from his airy height
" Haply at utmost need descries a fawn,
" Or kid, disporting in some fruitful vale,
" Down, down at once the greedy felon drops
" With wings close cow'ring in his hollow sides
" Full on the helpless victim; thence again
" Tow'ring in air he bears his luscious prize,
" And in his native wild enjoys the feast:
" So these forth issuing from the rocky shore
" Of distant Tagus on the quest for gain
" In realms unknown, which feverish fancy paints
" Glittering with gems and gold, range the wide seas,
" Till India's isthmus, rising with the sun
" To their keen sight, her fertile bosom spreads,
" Period and palm of all their labours past;

" Whereat with avarice and ambition fir'd,
" Eager alike for plunder and for fame,
" Onward they press to spring upon their prey;
" There every spoil obtain'd, which greedy haste
" By force or fraud could ravish from the hands
" Of Nature's peaceful sons, again they mount
" Their richly freighted bark; she, while the cries
" Of widows and of orphans rend the strand,
" Striding the billows, to the venal winds
" Spreads her broad vans, and flies before the gale.
" Here as by sad necessity I tell
" Of human woe, to rend the hearer's heart,
" Truth be my Muse, and thou, my bosom's star,
" The planetary mistress of my birth,
" Parent of all my bliss, of all my pain,
" Inspire me, gentle Pity, and attune
" Thy numbers, heavenly cherub, to my strain!
" Thou, too, for whom my heart breathes every wish,
" That filial love can form, fairest of isles,
" Albion, attend and deign to hear a son,
" Who for afflicted millions, prostrate slaves
" Beneath oppression's scourge, and waining fast
" By ghastly famine and destructive war,
" No venal suit prefers; so may thy fleets,
" Mistress of commerce, link the Western world
" To thy maternal bosom, chase the sun
" Up to his source, and in the bright display
" Of empire and the liberal search of fame
" Belt the wide globe—but mount, ye guardian waves,
" Stand as a wall before the spoiler's path!
" Ye stars, your bright intelligence withdraw,

" And darkness cover all, whom lust of gold,
" Fell rapine, and extortion's guilty hope
" Rouse from their native dust to rend the thrones
" Of peaceful princes, and usurp that soil,
" Where late as humble traffickers they sought
" And found a shelter: thus what they obtain'd
" By supplication they extend by force,
" Till in the wantonness of power they grasp
" Whole provinces, where millions are their slaves.
" Ah whither shall I turn to meet the face
" Of love and human kindness in this world,
" On which I now am ent'ring? Gracious heaven,
" If, as I trust, thou hast bestow'd a trace
" Of thy best gift benevolence on me,
" Oh visit me in mercy, and preserve
" That spark of thy divinity alive,
" Till time shall end me! So when all the blasts
" Of malice and unkindness, which my fate
" May have in store, shall vent their rage upon me,
" Feeling, but still forgiving, the assault,
" I may persist with patience to devote
" My life, my love, my labours to mankind."

* * *

The severest misfortune, that could menace my unhappy patron, was now hanging over him. The state of Lady Halifax's health became daily more and more alarming; she seemed to be sinking under a consumptive and exhausted constitution. It was then the custom

for the chief families in Northamptonshire to attend the county races in great form, and the Lord Lieutenant on that occasion made it a point to assemble his friends and party in their best equipage and array to grace the meeting: this was ever a formidable task for poor Lady Halifax, whose tender spirits and declining health were ill suited to such undertakings; but upon the last year of her accompanying her Lord to this meeting, I found her more than usually apprehensive, and she too truly predicted that it would accelerate her death. I attended upon her at that meeting, and when I expressed my hopes that she had escaped her fatigues without any material injury, as I was handing her to her coach on the morning of her departure, she shook her head and again repeated her entire conviction that she should not long survive. My heart sunk as I took leave of her under this melancholy impression: we met no more: she languished for a time, and to the irreparable loss of her afflicted husband died.

Lady Halifax was by birth of humble rank, and not endowed by nature with shining talents or superior charms of person. She did

not aim at that display, which conciliates popularity, nor affect those arts, which invite admiration; without any of those brilliant qualities, which, whilst they gratify a husband's vanity, too often endanger his honour and his peace, the virtues of her heart and the serenity of her temper were so happily adapted to allay and tranquillize the more empassioned character of her Lord, that every man, who knew his nature, could not fail to foresee the dangers he would be exposed to, when she was no longer at his side. He had still a true and faithful friend in Doctor Crane, and to him Lady Halifax had been most entirely attached. He merited all her confidence, and sincerely lamented her loss, foreseeing, as I had good reason to know, the unhappy consequences it might lead to, for by this time I was favoured with some tokens of his regard, that could not be mistaken, and though his feelings never forced him into warm expressions, yet his heart was kind, and his friendship sincere. Many days passed before I was summoned to pay my respects to the afflicted widower, who was represented to me as being almost frantic with his grief. I divided this time between

my own home and the house of Ecton: at length I was invited to Horton, and the meeting was a very painful moment to us both.

We soon removed to town for the winter season, and there whilst politics and public office began to occupy his thoughts, and by degrees to wean him from his sorrows, I resumed my solitary lodgings in Mount-Street, where with my old Swiss servant for my caterer and cook, I lived in all the temperance and nearly all the retirement of a hermit. Then it was that I derived all my resources from the books I possessed, and the talents God had given me. I read and wrote incessantly, and should have been in absolute solitude but for the kind visits of my friend Higgs, who not forgetting our late intimacy at college and at school, nor disdaining my poor fare and dull society, cheered and relieved my spirits with the liveliness and hilarity natural to him: these are favours I can never forget; for they supported me at a time, when I felt all the gloominess of my situation, and yet wanted energy to extricate myself from it, and renounce those expectations, to which I had devoted so much time in profitless dependance. I lived indeed upon the narrow-

est system I could adopt, but nevertheless I could not make the income of my fellowship bear me through without the generous assistance of my father, and that reflection was the only painful concomitant of a disappointment, that I should not in my own particular else have wasted a regret upon.

In the mean time the long and irksome residence in town, which my attendance upon Lord Halifax entailed upon me, and the painful separation from my family became almost insupportable, and whilst I was meditating a retreat, my good father, who participated with me and his whole family in these sensations, projected and concluded an exchange for his living of Stanwick with the Reverend Mr. Samuel Knight, and with permission of the Bishop of London, took the vicarage of Fulham as an equivalent, and thereby opened to me the happy prospect of an easier access to those friends so justly valued and so truly dear.

In point of income the two livings were as nearly equal as could well be, therefore no pecuniary compensation passed between the contracting parties; but the comforts of tranquillity in point of duty, or of conveniences in

respect of locality, were all in favour of Mr. Knight, and nothing could have prevailed with my father for leaving those, whom he had so long loved and cherished as his flock, but the generous motive of giving me an asylum in the bosoms of my family. With this kind and benevolent object in his view, he submitted to the pain of tearing himself from his connexions, and amidst the lamentations of his neighbours and parishioners came up to Fulham to take upon himself the charge of a great suburbane parish, and quitted Stanwick, where he had resided for the space of thirty years in peace, beloved by all around him.

He found a tolerably good parsonage house at Fulham, in which, with my mother and my sisters, he established himself with as much content, as could be looked for. Wherever he went the odour of his good name, and of course his popularity, was sure to follow him: but the task of preaching to a large congregation after being so long familiarized to the service of his little church at Stanwick, oppressed his modest mind, and though his person, matter and manner were such as always left favourable impressions on his hearers, yet it was evi-

dent to us, who knew him and belonged to him, that he suffered by his exertions.

Bishop Sherlock was yet living and resided in the palace, but in the last stage of bodily decay. The ruins of that luminous and powerful mind were still venerable, though his speech was almost unintelligible, and his features cruelly disarranged and distorted by the palsey: still his genius was alive, and his judgment discriminative, for it was in this lamentable state that he performed the task of selecting sermons for the last volume he committed to the press, and his high reputation was in no respect lowered by the selection. I had occasionally the honour of being admitted to visit that great man in company with my father, to whom he was uniformly kind and gracious, and in token of his favour bestowed on him a small Prebend in the church of Saint Paul, the only one that became vacant within his time.

Mrs. Sherlock was a truly respectable woman, and my mother enjoyed much of her society till the bishop's death brought a successor in his place.

In the adjoining parish of Hammersmith lived Mr. Dodington, at a splendid villa,

which by the rule of contraries he was pleased to call La Trappe, and his inmates and familiars the monks of the convent; these were Mr. Windham his relation, whom he made his heir, Sir William Breton, privy purse to the king, and Doctor Thompson, a physician out of practice; these gentlemen formed a very curious society of very opposite characters; in short is was a trio consisting of a misanthrope, a courtier and a quack. Mr. Glover, the author of Leonidas, was occasionally a visitor, but not an inmate as those above-mentioned. How a man of Dodington's sort came to single out men of their sort (with the exception of Mr. Glover) is hard to say, but though his instruments were never in unison, he managed to make music out of them all. He could make and find amusement in contrasting the sullenness of a Grumbletonian with the egregious vanity and self-conceit of an antiquated coxcomb, and as for the Doctor he was a jack-pudding ready to his hand at any time. He was understood to be Dodington's body-physician, but I believe he cared very little about his patient's health, and his patient cared still less about his prescriptions; and when in his

capacity of superintendant of his patron's dietetics, he cried out one morning at breakfast to have the *muffins* taken away, Dodington aptly enough cried out at the same time to the servant to take away the *raggamuffin*, and truth to say, a more dirty animal than poor Thompson was never seen on the outside of a pig stye; yet he had the plea of poverty and no passion for cold water.

It is about a short and pleasant mile from this villa to the parsonage house of Fulham, and Mr. Dodington having visited us with great politeness, I became a frequent guest at La Trappe, and passed a good deal of my time with him there, in London also, and occasionally in Dorsetshire. He was certainly one of the most extraordinary men of his time, and as I had opportunities of contemplating his character in all its various points of view, I trust my readers will not regret that I have devoted some pages to the further delineation of it.

I have before observed that the nature of my business as private secretary to Lord Halifax was by no means such as to employ any great portion of my time, and of course I could devote many hours to my own private pursuits

without neglecting those attendances, which were due to my principal. Lord Halifax had also removed his abode to Downing-Street, having quitted his house in Grosvenor-Square upon the decease of his lady, so that I rarely found it necessary to sleep in town, and could divide the rest of my time between Fulham and La Trappe. It was likewise entirely correspondent with Lord Halifax's wishes that I should cultivate my acquaintance with Mr. Dodington, with whom he not only lived upon intimate terms as a friend, but was now in train to form, as it seemed, some opposition connexions; for at this time it happened that upon a breach with the Duke of Newcastle, he threw up his office of First Lord of Trade and Plantations, and detached himself from administration. This took place towards the latter end of the late king's reign, and the ground of the measure was a breach of promise on the part of the Duke to give him the Seals and a Seat in the Cabinet as Secretary of State for the Colonies.

In the summer of this year, being now an ex-secretary of an ex-statesman, I went to Eastbury, the seat of Mr. Dodington, in Dor-

setshire, and passed the whole time of his stay in that place. Lord Halifax with his brother-in-law Colonel Johnstone of the Blues paid a visit there, and the Countess Dowager of Stafford and old Lady Hervey were resident with us the whole time. Our splendid host was excelled by no man in doing the honours of his house and table; to the ladies he had all the courtly and profound devotion of a Spaniard, with the ease and gaiety of a Frenchman towards the men. His mansion was magnificent, massy and stretching out to a great extent of front with an enormous portico of Doric columns ascended by a stately flight of steps; there were turrets and wings that went I know not whither, though now they are levelled with the ground, and gone to more ignoble uses: Vanbrugh, who constructed this superb edifice, seemed to have had the plan of Blenheim in his thoughts, and the interior was as proud and splendid as the exterior was bold and imposing. All this was exactly in unison with the taste of its magnificent owner, who had gilt and furnished the apartments with a profusion of finery, that kept no terms with simplicity, and not always with elegance or

harmony of style. Whatever Mr. Dodington's revenue then was, he had the happy art of managing it with that regularity and œconomy, that I believe he made more display at less cost, than any man in the kingdom but himself could have done. His town house in Pall-Mall, his villa at Hammersmith, and the mansion above described, were such establishments as few nobles in the nation were possessed of. In either of these he was not to be approached but through a suite of apartments, and rarely seated but under painted ceilings and gilt entablatures. In his villa you were conducted through two rows of antique marble statues ranged in a gallery floored with the rarest marbles, and enriched with columns of granite and lapis lazuli; his saloon was hung with the finest Gobelin tapestry, and he slept in a bed encanopied with peacocks' feathers in the style of Mrs. Montague. When he passed from Pall-Mall to La Trappe it was always in a coach, which I could suspect had been his ambassadorial equipage at Madrid, drawn by six fat unwieldy black horses, short docked and of colossal dignity: neither was he less

characteristic in apparel than in equipage; he had a wardrobe loaded with rich and flaring suits, each in itself a load to the wearer, and of these I have no doubt but many were cœval with his embassy above mentioned, and every birth-day had added to the stock. In doing this he so contrived as never to put his old dresses out of countenance by any variations in the fashion of the new; in the mean time his bulk and corpulency gave full display to a vast expanse and profusion of brocade and embroidery, and this, when set off with an enormous tye-perriwig and deep laced ruffles, gave the picture of an ancient courtier in his gala habit, or Quin in his stage dress; nevertheless it must be confessed this style, though out of date, was not out of character, but harmonized so well with the person of the wearer, that I remember when he made his first speech in the House of Peers as Lord Melcombe, all the flashes of his wit, all the studied phrases and well-turned periods of his rhetoric lost their effect simply because the orator had laid aside his magisterial tye, and put on a modern bag wig, which was as much out of costume

upon the broad expanse of his shoulders, as a cue would have been upon the robes of the Lord Chief Justice.

Having thus dilated more than perhaps I should have done upon this distinguished person's passion for magnificence and display, when I proceed to enquire into those principles of good taste, which should naturally have been the accompaniments and directors of that magnificence, I fear I must be compelled by truth to admit that in these he was deficient. Of pictures he seemed to take his estimate only by their cost; in fact he was not possessed of any; but I recollect his saying to me one day in his great saloon at Eastbury, that if he had half a score pictures of a thousand pounds apiece, he would gladly decorate his walls with them, in place of which I am sorry to say he had stuck up immense patches of gilt leather shaped into bugle horns upon hangings of rich crimson velvet, and round his state bed he displayed a carpeting of gold and silver embroidery, which too glaringly betrayed its derivation from coat, waistcoat and breeches by the testimony of pockets, button-holes and loops with other equally incontrovertible witnesses,

subpœna'd from the tailor's shopboard. When he paid his court at St. James's to the present queen upon her nuptials, he approached to kiss her hand decked in an embroidered suit of silk with lilac waistcoat and breeches, the latter of which in the act of kneeling down, forgot their duty, and broke loose from their moorings in a very indecorous and uncourtly manner.

In the higher provinces of taste we may contemplate his character with more pleasure, for he had an ornamented fancy and a brilliant wit. He was an elegant Latin classic, and well versed in history ancient and modern.—His favourite prose writer was Tacitus, and I scarce ever surprised him in his hours of reading without finding that author upon his table before him. He understood him well, and descanted upon him very agreeably and with much critical acumen. Mr. Dodington was in nothing more remarkable than in ready perspicuity and clear discernment of a subject thrown before him on a sudden; take his first thoughts then, and he would charm you; give him time to ponder and refine, you would perceive the spirit of his sentiments and the vigour of his genius evaporate by the process;

for though his first view of the question would be a wide one and clear withal, when he came to exercise the subtlety of his disquisitorial powers upon it, he would so ingeniously dissect and break it into fractions, that as an object, when looked upon too intently for a length of time, grows misty and confused, so would the question under his discussion, when the humour took him to be hyper-critical. Hence it was that his impromptu's in parliament were generally more admired than his studied speeches, and his first suggestions in the councils of his party better attended to than his prepared opinions.

Being a man of humble birth, he seemed to have an innate respect for titles, and none bowed with more devotion to the robes and fasces of high rank and office. He was decidedly aristocratic: he paid his court to Walpole in panegyric poems, apologizing for his presumption by reminding him, that it was better to be pelted with roses than with rotten eggs; to Chesterfield, to Winnington, Pulteney, Fox and the luminaries of his early time he offered up the oblations of his genius, and incensed them with all the odours of his wit.

in his latter days, and within the period of my acquaintance with him, the Earl of Bute in the plenitude of his power was the god of his idolatry. That noble Lord was himself too much a man of letters and a patron of the sciences to overlook a witty head, that bowed so low, he accordingly put a coronet upon it, which, like the *barren sceptre* in the hand of Macbeth, merely served as a ticket for the coronation procession, and having nothing else to leave to posterity in memory of its owner, left its mark upon the lid of his coffin.

During my stay at Eastbury, we were visited by the late Mr. Henry Fox and Mr. Alderman Beckford: the solid good sense of the former, and the dashing loquacity of the latter, formed a striking contrast between the characters of these gentlemen. To Mr. Fox our host paid all that courtly homage, which he so well knew how to time and where to apply; to Beckford he did not observe the same attentions, but in the happiest flow of his raillery and wit combated this intrepid talker with admirable effect. It was an interlude truly comic and amusing. Beckford loud, voluble, self-sufficient and galled by hits, which he could

not parry and probably did not expect, laid himself more and more open in the vehemence of his argument; Dodington, lolling in his chair in perfect apathy and self-command, dosing and even snoring at intervals in his lethargic way, broke out every now and then into such gleams and flashes of wit and irony, as by the contrast of his phlegm with the other's impetuosity, made his humour irresistible, and set the table in a roar. He was here upon his very strongest ground, for no man was better calculated to exemplify how true the observation is——

Ridiculum acri
Fortius ac melius—

At the same time he had his serious hours and graver topics, which he would handle with all due solemnity of thought and language, and these were to me some of the most pleasing hours I have passed with him, for he could keep close to his point, if he would, and could be not less argumentative than he was eloquent, when the question was of magnitude enough to interest him. It is with singular satisfaction I can truly say that I never knew

him flippant upon sacred subjects. He was however generally courted and admired as a gay companion rather than as a grave one.

I have said that the dowager Ladies Stafford and Hervey made part of our domestic society, and as the trivial amusement of cards was never resorted to in Mr. Doddington's house, it was his custom in the evenings to entertain his company with reading, and in this art he excelled; his selections however were curious, for he treated these ladies with the whole of Fielding's *Jonathan Wild*, in which he certainly consulted his own turn for irony rather than their's for elegance, but he set it off with much humour after his manner, and they were polite enough to be pleased, or at least to appear as if they were.

His readings from Shakespear were altogether as whimsical, for he chose his passages only where buffoonery was the character of the scene; one of these I remember was that of the clown, who brings the asp to Cleopatra. He had however a manuscript copy of Glover's Medea, which he gave us *con amore*, for he was extremely warm in his praises of that classical drama, which Mrs. Yates afterwards

brought upon the stage, and played in it with her accustomed excellence; he did me also the honour to devote an evening to the reading of some lines, which I had hastily written to the amount of about four hundred, partly complimentary to him as my host, and in part consolatory to Lord Halifax upon the event of his retiring from public office; they flattered the politics then in favour with Mr. Dodington, and coincided with his wishes for detaching Lord Halifax from the administration of the Duke of Newcastle. I was not present, as may well be conceived, at this reading, but I confess I sat listening in the next room, and was not a little gratified by what I overheard. Of this manuscript I have long since destroyed the only copy that I had, and if I had it now in my hands it would be only to consign it to the flames, for it was of that occasional class of poems for the day, which have no claim upon posterity, and in such I have not been ambitious to concern myself: it served the purpose however and amused the moment; it was also the tribute of my mite to the lares of that mansion, where the Muse of Young had dictated his tragedy of The Revenge, and

which the Genius of Voltaire had honoured with a visit: here Glover had courted inspiration, and Thompson caught it: Dodington also himself had a lyre, but he had hang it up, and it was never very high-sounding; yet he was something more than a mere admirer of the Muse. He wrote small poems with great pains, and elaborate letters with much terseness of style, and some quaintness of expression: I have seen him refer to a volume of his own verses in manuscript, but he was very shy, and I never had the perusal of it. I was rather better acquainted with his *diary*, which since his death has been published, and I well remember the temporary disgust he seemed to take, when upon his asking what I would do with it, should he bequeath it to my discretion, I instantly replied, that I would destroy it. There was a third, which I more coveted a sight of than of either of the above, as it contained a miscellaneous collection of anecdotes, repartees, good sayings and humorous incidents, of which he was part author and part compiler, and out of which he was in the habit of refreshing his memory, when he prepared himself to expect certain men of wit and

pleasantry either at his own house or elsewhere. Upon this practice, which he did not affect to conceal, he observed to me one day, that it was a compliment he paid to society, when he submitted to steal weapons out of his own armoury for their entertainment, and ingenuously added, that although his memory was not in general so correct as it had been, yet he trusted it would save him from the disgrace of repeating the same story to the same hearers, or foisting it into conversation in the wrong place or out of time. No man had fewer oversights of that sort to answer for, and fewer still were the men, whose social talents could be compared with those of Mr. Doddington.

Upon my return out of Dorsetshire, I was invited by my friends at Trinity College to come and offer myself as a candidate for the Lay-fellowship then vacant by the death of Mr. Titley the Danish envoy. There are but two fellowships of this description, and there were several solicitors for an exemption so desirable, but the unabated kindness of the master and seniors patronized my suit, and honoured me with that last and most distinguish-

ed mark of their favour and protection. I did not hold it long, for Providence had a blessing in store for me, which was an effectual disqualification from holding any honours on the terms of celibacy.

About this time I wrote my first legitimate drama in five acts, and entitled it *The Banishment of Cicero.* I was led to this by the perusal of Middleton's account of his life, which afforded me much entertainment. As the hero of a drama I was not happy in my choice of Cicero, and banishment is a tame incident to depend upon for the interest and catastrophe of a tragic plot. I knew that his philosophy had deserted him on this occasion, and that I could find no feature of Coriolanus in the character of my exile, but as I began it without any view of offering it to the stage, as long as I found amusement I continued to write. As a classical composition, which tells its story in fair language, and has stood the test of the press both in England and Ireland with the approbation of some, who were most competent to decide upon it, I may venture to say it was creditable to its author as a first attempt. It has been long out of print, and when after

a period of more than forty intermediate years I read it (as I have now been doing) with all the impartiality in my power, I certainly can discover inaccuracies in the diction here and there, and in the plot an absolute inaptitude to scenic exhibition, yet I think I may presume to say, that as a dramatic poem for the closet it will bear examination, though I cannot expect that any of its readers at this time would pass so favourable a judgment upon it as I was honoured with by Primate Stone and Bishop Warburton, from the latter of whom I received a letter, which I have preserved, and which I cannot withstand the temptation of inserting, though I am thoroughly conscious it bestows praises far above the merits of my humble work—

To Richard Cumberland, Esq.
Grosvenor-Square, May 15, 1767.

Dear Sir,

Let me thank you for the sight of a very fine dramatic Poem. It is (like Mr. Mason's) much too good for a prostitute stage. Yesterday I received a letter from the Primate. He was on the point of leaving Bath

for Ireland: so that my letter got to him just in time—It gives me great satisfaction, says he, that my opinion of Bishop Cumberland's grandson agrees with your's &c. &c.

I have the honour to be,
Dear Sir, your very faithful
And assured humble Servant,
W. Gloucester.

It is a singular circumstance, though perhaps not a favourable one, that in the dramatis personæ of this play there is not one auxiliary character; they are all principals, and such in respect of consequence as few authors ever brought together in one point of view, for they consist of the two Consuls L. Calphurnius Piso and Aulus Gabinius, the Tribune P. Clodius, Cicero and Pomponius Atticus, Caius Piso Frugi, Terentia and Tullia, wife and daughter of Cicero, and Clodia sister of the Tribune, without one speaking attendant or interloper throughout the piece, except a very few words from one Apollodorus.

To give display to characters like these the bounds of any single drama would hardly serve, and of course the arrangement was so far in-

judicious; yet the author, as if he had not enough on his hands, goes aside to speak of Cato in the scene betwixt Gabinius and Clodius—

" *Gab.*—Cato is still severe, is still himself:
" Rough and unshaken in his squalid garb,
" He told us he had long in anguish mourn'd,
" Not for a private but the public cause,
" Not for the wrong of one, but wrong of all,
" Of Liberty, of Virtue and of Rome.
" *Clod.*—No more: I sleep o'er Cato's drowsy theme.
" He is the senate's drone, and dreams of liberty,
" When Rome's vast empire is set up to sale,
" And portioned out to each ambitious bidder
" In marketable lots——"

In the further progress of the same scene Pompey is mentioned, and Calphurnius Piso introduced in the following terms—

" *Gab.*——Oh! who shall attempt to read
" In Pompey's face the movements of his heart?
" The same calm artificial look of state,
" His half-clos'd eyes in self-attention wrapt,
" Serve him alike to mask unseemly joy,
" Or hide the pangs of envy and revenge.
" *Clod.*—See, yonder your old colleague Piso comes!
" But name hypocrisy and he appears.
" How like his grandsire's monument he looks!
" He wears the dress of holy Numa's days,

" The brow and beard of Zeno ; trace him home,
" You'll find his house the school of vice and lust,
" The foulest sink of Epicurus' sty,
" And him the rankest swine of all the herd."

I find the two first acts are wound up with some couplets in rhyme after the manner of the middle age. It will I hope be pardonable if I here insert the lines, with which Clodius concludes the first act—

" When flaming comets vex our lighted sphere,
" Though now the nations melt with awful fear,
" From the dread omen fatal ills presage,
" Dire plague and famine and war's wasting rage:
" In time some brighter genius may arise,
" And banish signs and omens from the skies,
" Expound the comet's nature and its cause,
" Assign its periods and prescribe its laws,
" Whilst man grown wise, with his discoveries fraught,
" Shall wonder how he needed to be taught."

I shall only add that the dialogue between Cicero and Atticus in the third act seems in point of poetry one of the happiest efforts of its author; in short, although this drama has not all the finishing of a veteran artist, yet in parts it has a warmth of colouring and a strength of expression, which might induce a

candid reader to augur not unfavourably of the novice who composed it.

It is here I begin more particularly to feel the weight of those difficulties, which at my outset I too rashly announced myself prepared to meet. When I review what I have been saying about this my first drama, and recollect what numbers are behind, I am almost tempted to shrink back from the task, to which I am committed. If indeed the candour and liberality of my readers will allow me to step out of myself, (if I may so term it) whilst I am speaking of myself, I have little to fear; but if I must be tied down to my individuality, and not allowed my fair opinion without incurring the charge of self-conceit, I am in a most unenviable situation, and must either abandon my undertaking, or abide by the conditions of it with what fortitude I can muster. If, when I am professedly the recorder of my own writings, I am to record nothing in them or about them but their simple titles and the order in which they were written, I give the reader nothing more than a catalogue, which any magazine might furnish, or the prompter's register as well supply; if on the contrary I proceed to

fulfil the real purposes of biographer and critic, ought I not to act as honestly and conscientiously in my own case, as I would in the instance of another person? I think I ought: it is what the title of my book professes; how I am to execute it I do not know, and how my best endeavours may be received I can form no guess. In the mean time I will strive to arm myself with an humble but honest mind, resolving, as far as in me lies, not to speak partially of my works because they are my own, nor slightingly against my conscience from apprehension that readers may be found to differ from me, where my thoughts may seem more favourable than their's. The latter of these consequences may perhaps frequently occur, and when it does, my memoirs must encounter it, and acquit themselves of it as they can; for myself, it cannot be long before I am alike insensible to censure or applause.

This play, of which I have been speaking, laid by me for a considerable time; till Lord Halifax one day, when we were at Bushey Park, desired me to shew it to him; he read it, and immediately proposed to carry it to Garrick, and recommend it to him for representa-

tion. Garrick was then at Hampton, and I went with Lord Halifax across the park to his house. This was the first time I found myself in company with that extraordinary man. He received his noble visitor with profound obeisance, and in truth there were some claims upon his civility for favours and indulgencies granted to him by Lord Halifax as Ranger of Bushey Park. I was silently attentive to every minute particular of this interview, and soon discovered the embarrassment, which the introduction of my manuscript occasioned; I saw my cause was desperate, though my advocate was sanguine, and in truth the first effort of a raw author did not promise much to the purpose of the manager. He took it however with all possible respect, and promised an attentive perusal, but those tell-tale features, so miraculously gifted in the art of assumed emotions, could not mask their real ones, and I predicted to Lord Halifax, as we returned to the lodge, that I had no expectation of my play being accepted. A day or two of what might scarce be called suspense confirmed this prediction, when Mr. Garrick having stated his despair of accommodating a play on such a

plan to the purposes of the stage, returned the manuscript to Lord Halifax with many apologies to his Lordship, and some few qualifying words to its author, which certainly was as much as in reason could be expected from him, though it did not satisfy the patron of the play, who warmly resented his non-compliance with his wishes, and for a length of time forbore to live in habits of his former good neighbourhood with him.

When I published this play, which I soon after did, I was conscious that I published Mr. Garrick's justification for refusing it, and I made no mention of the circumstances above stated.

George Ridge Esquire of Kilmiston in the county of Hants, had two sons and one daughter by Miss Brooke, niece to my grandfather Bentley: with this family we had lived as friends and relations in habits of the greatest intimacy. It was upon an excursion, as I have before related, to this gentleman's house that I founded my school-boy poem written at Bury, and our families had kept up an interchange of annual visits for a course of time. From these meetings I had been for several

years unluckily excluded by my avocations to college or London, till upon Mr. Ridge's coming to town accompanied by his wife and daughter, and taking lodgings in the near neighbourhood of Mount-Street, where I held my melancholy abode, I was kindly entertained by them, and found so many real charms in the modest manners and blooming beauty of the amiable daughter, that I passed every hour I could command in her society, and devoted all my thoughts to the attainment of that happiness, which it was in her power to bestow upon my future days. As soon therefore as I obtained, through the patronage of Lord Halifax, a small establishment as Crown-Agent for the province of Nova Scotia, I began to hope the object I aspired to was within my reach, when upon a visit she made with her parents to mine at Fulham, I tendered my addresses, and had the unspeakable felicity to find them accepted, and sanctioned by the consent of all parties concerned; thus I became possessed of one, whom the virtues of her heart and the charms of her person had effectually endeared to me, and on the 19th day of February 1759, (being my birth-day) I was married by

my father in the church of Kilmiston to Elizabeth, only daughter of George and Elizabeth Ridge.

Lord Halifax upon some slight concessions from the Duke of Newcastle had reassumed his office of First Lord of Trade and Plantations, and I returned with my wife to Fulham, taking a house for a short time in Duke-Street Westminster, and afterwards in Abingdon Buildings.

In the following year, upon the death of the king, administration it is well known took a new shape, and all eyes were turned towards the Earl of Bute, as dispenser of favours and awarder of promotions. Mr. Dodington, whom I had visited a second time at Eastbury with my wife and her father Mr. Ridge, obtained an English peerage, and Lord Halifax was honoured with the high office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and was preparing to open his majesty's first parliament in that kingdom: I had reason to believe myself at this time very much in his confidence, and in the conduct of a certain private transaction, which I am not called upon to explain, I had done him faithful service; happy for him it would have been, and

the prevention of innumerable troubles and vexations, if my zealous efforts had been permitted to take effect, but a fatal propensity had again seized possession of him, and probably the more strongly for the interruption it had received—but of this enough.

His family was now to be formed upon an establishment suitable to his high office. In these arrangements there was much to do, and I was fully occupied Some few persons of obscure characters were pressed upon him for subordinate situations from a quarter, where I had no communication or connexion; but I had the satisfaction to see his old and faithful friend Doctor Crane prepare himself to head the list of his chaplains, and Doctor Oswald, afterwards Bishop of Raphoe, with my good father compleated that department. I obtained a situation for a gentleman, who had married my eldest sister, but what gave me peculiar satisfaction was to have it in my power to gratify the wishes of one of the best and bravest young officers of his time, Captain William Ridge, brother to my wife. He had served the whole war in America with distinguished reputation; had been shot and carried off the

field in the fatal affair of Ticonderago, and was now returned with honourable wounds and the praises and esteem of his general and brother officers. This amiable, this excellent friend, whose heart was as it were my own, and whose memory will be ever dear to me, I caused to be put upon the staff of Aids-de-Camp, and had the happiness of making him one of my family during the whole time of my residence in Dublin Castle as Ulster-Secretary.

William Gerard Hamilton, a name well known, had negociated himself into the office of Chief Secretary. I need say no more than that he did not owe this to the choice of Lord Halifax; of course it was not easy for that gentleman to find himself in the confidence of his principal, to whom he was little known, and in the first instance not altogether acceptable. I do not think he took much pains to conquer first impressions, and recommend himself to the confidence of Lord Halifax; it is certain he did not possess it, and the consequence was, that I, who held the secondary post of Ulster-Secretary, became involved in business of a nature, that should not in the course of office have belonged to me. Affairs of this sort,

which I did not court, and had no right to be concerned in, made my situation very delicate and not a little dangerous, whilst at the same time the entire superintendance of Lord Halifax's private finances, then very far from being in a flourishing condition, was a task, which no prudent man would covet, yet such an one as for his sake I made no scruple to undertake. It was his lot to succeed the Duke of Bedford, and his high spirit would not suffer him to sink upon the comparison; I found him therefore resolute to start on his career with great magnificence, and leave behind him all attentions to expence. All that was in my power I did with unwearied diligence and attention to his interest, inspecting his accounts and paying his bills every week to the minutest article. I put his Green Cloth upon a liberal, but regulated, establishment; I placed a faithful and well experienced servant of my father's at the head of his stables and equipages, and gave charge of the household articles to his principal domestic, of whose honesty he had had many years experience

I had published my tragedy of The Banishment of Cicero by Mr. J. Walter at Charing

Cross upon quarto paper in a handsome type; I found it pirated and published in a sixpenny edition at Dublin, from the press of George Faulkner of immortal memory: if he had subjoined a true and faithful list of errata, I doubt if he could have afforded it at the price. I also upon the king's accession composed and published a poem addressed to the young sovereign, in which I attempted to delineate the character of the people he was to govern and the principles of that conduct, which, if pursued, would ensure their attachment, and establish his own happiness and glory. This I wrote in blank verse; it was published by Mr. Dodsley, and I did not give my name to it. Of the extent of its circulation I cannot speak, neither did I make any search into the reviews of that time for the character, good or ill, which they thought fit to give it.

I had taken leave of Lord Melcombe the day preceding the coronation, and found him before a looking-glass in his new robes practising attitudes and debating within himself upon the most graceful mode of carrying his coronet in the procession. He was in high glee with his fresh and blooming honours, and

I left him in the act of dictating a billet to Lady Hervey, apprising her that a *young lord* was coming to throw himself at her feet. He conjured me to keep my Lord Lieutenant firmly attached to Lord Bute, and we parted.

Here however I must take leave to pause upon a period in the life of my uncle Mr. Bentley, when fortune smiled upon him, and his genius was drawn forth into exertion by the patronage of Lord Bute. Through my intimacy with Mr. Dodington I had been the lucky instrument of opening that channel, which for a time at least brought him affluence, comfort and consideration. There was not a man of literary talents then in the kingdom, who stood so high and so deservedly in fame and favour with the Premier as Mr. Bentley; and though, when that great personage went out of office, my uncle lost every place of profit, that could be taken from him, he continued to enjoy a pension of five hundred pounds per annum, in which his widow had her life, and received it many years after his decease.

Lord Bute had all the disposition of a Mecænas, and fondly hoped he would be the auspicious instrument of opening an Augustan

reign; he sent out his runners upon the search for men of talents, and Dodington was perfectly reconciled to the honour of being his provider in that laudable pursuit, for which no man was better qualified. He was not wanting in intuition to discern what the powers of Bentley's genius were, and none could better point out the purposes, to which they might be usefully directed. Opposition was then beginning to look up, and soon felt the sharp point of Bentley's pen in one of the keenest and wittiest satires, extant in our language. Lord Temple, Wilkes, and others of the party were attacked with unsparing asperity, and much classical acumen. Churchill, the Dryden of his age, and indisputably a man of a first-rate genius, was too candid not to acknowledge the merit of the poem, and when he declined taking up the gauntlet so pointedly thrown down to him, it was not because he held his challenger in contempt. It was this poem, that brought an accumulation of favours on its author, but I don't know that he ever had an interview with the bestower of them, and I am rather inclined to think they never met. About the same time my uncle composed his witty but

eccentric drama of *The Wishes*, in which he introduces the speaking Harlequin after the manner of the Italians. This curious production, after being circulated in manuscript, admired and applauded by all who had seen it, and those the very party, which led the taste of the time under the auspices of Lord Bute, was privately rehearsed at Lord Melcombe's villa of La Trappe. It was on a beautiful summer's evening when it was recited upon the terrace on the banks of the Thames, by Obrien, Miss Elliot, Mrs. Haughton and some few others under the management of Foote and Murphy, who attended on the occasion. At this rehearsal, there was present—*a youth unknown to fame*—who was understood to be protected by Lord Bute, and came thither in a hackney coach with Mrs. Haughton. This gentleman was of the party at the supper with which the evening's entertainment concluded; he modestly resigned the conversation to those, who were more disposed to carry it on, whilst it was only in the contemplation of an intelligent countenance that we could form any conjecture as to that extraordinary gift of genius, which in course of time advanced him to the

Great Seal of the kingdom and the Earldom of Rosslyn.

Foote, Murphy and Obrien were then joint conductors of the summer theatre, and performed their plays upon the stage of Drury Lane, and here they brought out *The Wishes*, which had now been so much the topic of conversation, that it drew all the wit and fashion then in town to its first representation. The brilliancy of its dialogue, and the reiterated strokes of point and repartee kept the audience in good humour with the leading acts, and seemed to augur favourably for the conclusion, till when the last of the *Three Wishes* produced the ridiculous catastrophe of the hanging of Harlequin in full view of the audience, my uncle, the author, then sitting by me, whispered in my ear—"If they don't damn "this, they deserve to be damn'd themselves—" and whilst he was yet speaking the roar began, and *The Wishes* were irrevocably condemned. Mr. Harris some years after gave it a second chance upon his stage: the judgment of the public could not take away the merit of the piece, but it decided against his success. Upon the hint of this play, and the entertainment at

La Trappe, where Foote had been a guest, that wicked wit took measure of his host, and founded his satirical drama of *The Patron*— in short he feasted, flattered and lampooned.

Mr. Bentley also wrote a very elegant poem, and addressed it as an epistle to Lord Melcombe: it was in my opinion a most exquisite composition, in no respect inferior to his satire, but for reasons I could never understand, nor even guess, it was coolly received by Melcombe, and stopt with him. If that poem is in the hands of any of Mr. Bentley's family, it is much to be regretted that they withhold it from the public, though all that was then temporary is now long past and forgotten.

What may be the nature or amount of the manuscripts, which my uncle may have left behind him, I do not know: I can speak only of two dramas; one of these entitled Philodamus has been given to the public by Mr. Harris, and Henderson performed the character, that gives its name to the play. The ingenious author always wrote for the reader, he did not study how to humour the spectator: Philodamus has much of the old cast in it style, with a considerable portion of originality

and a bold vein of humour running through it, occasionally intermixed even with the pathos of the scene, which in a modern composition, professing itself to be a tragedy, is a perilous experiment. Such it proved to Philodamus; its very best passages in perusal were its weakest points in representation, and it may be truly said it was ruined by its virtues: but in the galleries of our theatres the Graces have no seats, and he that writes to the populace must not borrow the pen of the author of Philodamus. Poet Gray wrote a long and elaborate critique upon this drama, which I saw, and though his flattery was outrageously pedantic, yet the incense of praise from author to author is always sweet, and perhaps not the less acceptable on account of its being so seldom offered up. The other drama on the Genoese Conspiracy I saw in its unfinished state, and can only say that I was struck by certain passages, but cannot speak of it as a whole.

When the ceremony of the coronation was over, the Lord Lieutenant set out for Ireland with a numerous cavalcade. I was now the father of two infant children, a daughter and a son; these I left with their grandmother Mrs.

Ridge, and was accompanied by my wife, though in a state ill calculated to endure the rough roads by land, and the more rough passage by sea: my father, mother and sisters were with us in the yacht; they took a house in Dublin, and I was by office an inhabitant of the castle, and lodged in very excellent and commodious apartments.

The speech of the Lord Lieutenant upon the opening of the session is upon record. It was generally esteemed a very brilliant composition. His graceful person and impressive manner of delivery set it off to its best advantage, and all things seemed to augur well for his success.—When I was called in jointly with Secretary Hamilton to take the project and rough copy of this speech into consideration, I could not help remarking the extraordinary efforts, which that gentleman made to engraft his own very peculiar style upon the sketch before him; in this I sometimes agreed with him, but more commonly opposed him, till Lord Halifax, whose patience began to be exhausted, no longer submitted his copy to be dissected, but took it to himself with such alterations as he saw fit to adopt, and those but few. I must

candidly acknowledge that at times when I have heard people searching for internal evidence in the style of Junius as to the author of those famous letters, I have called to recollection this circumstance, which I have now related, and occasionally said that the style of Junius bore a strong resemblance to what I had observed of the style of Secretary Hamilton; beyond this I never had the least grounds for conjecture, nor any clue to lead me to the discovery of that anonymous writer beyond what I have alluded to.

I remember a conversation he held with me some time before we left England on the subject of Mr. Edmund Burke, whom he had then attached to himself, and for whom he wished me to assist in projecting some establishment. I had then never seen that eminent person, nor did I meet him till after my arrival in Dublin, when I had merely the opportunity of introducing myself to him in passing through the apartment, where he was in attendance upon Mr. Hamilton. He had indeed his fortune to make, but he was not disposed to make it by any means but such as perfectly accorded with his feelings and his

honour; for when Mr. Hamilton contrived to accommodate him by some private manœuvre, which I am not correctly possessed of, he saw occasion in a short time after his acceptance of it to throw it up, and break from all connexion with that gentleman and his politics. With the Lord Lieutenant he had little, if any, correspondence or acquaintance, for though Lord Halifax's intuition could not have failed to discover the merits of Mr. Burke, and rightly to have appreciated them, had they ever come cordially into contact, it was not from the quarter, in which he was then placed, that favour and promotion were to be looked for.

Without entering upon the superannuated politics of that time, it is enough to say that the king's business was carried through the session with success, and when the vote was passed for augmenting the revenue of the Lord Lieutenant, and settling it at the standard, to which it is now fixed, he accepted and passed it in favour of his successors, but peremptorily rejected it for himself. At this very time I had issued to the amount of twenty thousand pounds expended in office, whilst he had been

receiving about twelve, and I know not where that man could have been found, to whom those exceedings were more severely embarrassing than to this disinterested personage; but in this case he acted entirely from the dictates of his own high spirit, scarce deigning to lend an ear to the remonstrances even of Doctor Crane, and taking his measures with such rapidity, as to preclude all hesitation or debate.

His popularity however was so established by this high-minded proceeding, that upon his departure from Ireland all parties seemed to unite in applauding his conduct and invoking his return: the shore was thronged with crowds of people, that followed him to the water's edge, and the sea was in a manner covered with boats and vessels, that accompanied the yacht through the bay, studious to pay to their popular chief governor every valedictory honour, that their zeal and attention could devise.

The patronage of the Lord Lieutenant was at that time so extremely circumscribed, that except in the church and army few expectants could have been put in possession of their wishes, had not my under-secretary Mr. Rose-

ingrave discovered a number of lapsed patents, that had lain dormant in my office for a length of time, neither allowances nor perquisites being annexed to them. When a pretty considerable number of these patents were collected, and a list of them made out, I laid them before the Lord Lieutenant for his disposal in such manner as he saw fit. He at once discerned the great accommodation they would afford him, and very gladly availed himself of them, obtaining grants of parliament for each respectively, which, though virtually pensions, were not so glaringly obnoxious, nor were any of them in fact such absolute sine-cures, some duty being attached to every one of them. They were certainly a very seasonable accession to his patronage, and I make no doubt a very acceptable one to the circumstances of those, on whom he bestowed them. I sought no share in the spoil, but rather wished to stand correctly clear of any interested part in the transaction; some small thing however I asked and obtained for my worthy second Mr. Roseingrave, who had all the merit of the manœuvre, and many other merits of a much superior sort, for which I

sincerely esteemed him, and, till his death put an end to our correspondence, preserved a constant interchange of friendly sentiments, and at times of visits, when either he came to England, or I passed over to Ireland.

And here, in justice to myself, I must take credit for a disinterestedness which never could be betrayed into the acceptance of any thing, however covered or contrived (and many were the devices then ingeniously practised upon me) which delicacy could possibly interpret as a gratuity, whether tendered as an acknowledgment for favours past, or as an inducement for services to come. As I went to Ireland so I returned from it, perfectly clean-handed, not having profited my small fortune in the value of a single shilling, except from the fair income of my office arising from the established fees upon wool-licences, which netted, as well as I can recollect, about 300l. per annum, and did not clear my extraordinary expences.

Towards the close of the session the Lord Lieutenant took occasion one morning, when I waited upon him with his private accounts, to express his satisfaction in my services, adding that he wished to mark his particular ap-

probation of me by obtaining for me the rank of baronet: a title, he observed, very fit in his opinion for me to hold, as my father would in all probability be a bishop, and had a competent estate, which would descend to me. I confess it was not the sort of favour I expected, and struck me as a gaudy insubstantial offer, which as a mere addition to my name without any to my circumstances, was, (as my friend Isted afterwards described it) a mere mouthful of moonshine. I received the tender notwithstanding with all due respect, and only desired time to turn it in my thoughts. I was now the father of three children, for I had a daughter born in the castle, and when I found my father and my whole family adverse to the proposal, I signified to Lord Halifax my wish to decline the honour he had been pleased to offer to me: I certainly did not make my court to him by this refusal, and vanity, if I had listened to it, would in this instance have taught me better policy, but to err on the side of moderation and humility is an error, that ought not to be repented of; though I have reason to think from ensuing circumstances, that it contributed to weaken

an interest, which so many engines were at work to extinguish. In fact I plainly saw it was not for me to expect any lasting tenure in the share I then possessed of favour, unless I kept it up by sacrifices I was determined not to make; in short I had not that worldly wisdom, which could prevail with me to pay my homage in that quarter, from which my patron derived his ruin, and purchase by disgraceful attentions a continuance of that claim to his protection and regard, which I had earned by long and faithful services for ten years past, (the third part of my life) without intermission, and for the longer half of that time without consideration or reward.

As sure as ever my history brings me to the mention of that fatal step, which took me out of the path I was in, and turned me from the prosecution of those peaceful studies, to which I was so cordially devoted, and which were leading me to a profession, wherein some that went before me had distinguished themselves with such credit, so sure am I to feel at my heart a pang, that wounds me with regret and self-reproach for having yielded to a delusion at the inexperienced age of nineteen, since

which I have seen more than half a century go by, every day of which has only served to strengthen more and more the full conviction of my error.

Hamilton, who in the English parliament got the nick-name of Single-speech, spoke well, but not often, in the Irish House of Commons. He had a promptitude of thought, and a rapid flow of well-conceived matter, with many other requisites, that only seemed waiting for opportunities to establish his reputation as an orato.. He had a striking countenance, a graceful carriage, great self-possession and personal courage: he was not easily put out of his way by any of those unaccommodating repugnances, that men of weaker nerves or more tender consciences might have stumbled at, or been checked by; he could mask the passions, that were natural to him, and assume those, that did not belong to him: he was indefatigable, meditative, mysterious; his opinions were the result of long labour and much reflection, but he had the art of setting them forth as if they were the starts of ready genius and a quick perception: he had as much seeming steadiness as a partisan could

stand in need of, and all the real flexibility, that could suit his purpose, or advance his interest. He would fain have retained his connexion with Edmund Burke, and associated him to his politics, for he well knew the value of his talents, but in that object he was soon disappointed: the genius of Burke was of too high a cast to endure debasement.

The bishopric of Elphin became vacant, and was offered to Doctor Crane, who, though moderately beneficed in England, withstood the temptation of that valuable mitre and disinterestedly declined it. This was a decisive instance of the purity as well as moderation of his mind, for had he not disdained all ideas of negociation in church preferments, he might have accepted the see of Elphin, and traded with it in England, as others have done both before and since his time. He was not a man of this sort; he returned to his prebendal house at Westminster in the little Cloysters, and some years before his death resided in his parsonage house at Sutton, a living given him by Sir Roger Burgoyne, near to which I had a house, from which I paid him frequent visits, and with unspeakable concern saw that excellent man

resign himself with patience truly christian to the dreadful and tormenting visitation of a cancer in his face. I was at my house at Tetworth near Sutton in Bedfordshire, when he rode over to me one morning, and complained of a soreness on his lip, which he said he had hurt in shaving himself; it was hardly discernible, but alas! it contained the seeds of that dire disease, and from that moment kept spreading over his face with excruciating agony, which allowed him no repose, till it laid him in his grave.

By his refusal of Elphin, Doctor Oswald was promoted to an inferior bishopric, and my father thereby stood next upon the roll for a mitre: in the mean time he formed his friendships in Ireland with some of the most respectable characters, and made a visit, accompanied by my mother, to Doctor Pocock, Bishop of Ossory, at his episcopal house in Kilkenny.—That celebrated oriental traveller and author was a man of mild manners and primitive simplicity: having given the world a full detail of his researches in Egypt, he seemed to hold himself excused from saying any thing more about them, and observed in general an obdu-

rate taciturnity. In his carriage and deportment he appeared to have contracted something of the Arab character, yet there was no austerity in his silence, and though his air was solemn, his temper was serene. When we were on our road to Ireland, I saw from the windows of the inn at Daventry a cavalcade of horsemen approaching on a gentle trot, headed by an elderly chief in clerical attire, who was followed by five servants at distances geometrically measured and most precisely maintained, and who upon entering the inn proved to be this distinguished prelate, conducting his horde with the phlegmatic patience of a Scheik.

I found the state of society in Dublin very different from what I had observed in London; the professions more intermixt, and ranks more blended; in the great houses I met a promiscuous assembly of politicians, lawyers, soldiers and divines; the profusion of their tables struck me with surprise; nothing that I had seen in England could rival the Polish magnificence of Primate Stone, or the Parisian luxury of Mr. Clements. The style of Dodington was stately, but there was a watchful and well-

regulated œconomy over all, that here seemed out of sight and out of mind. The professional gravity of character maintained by our English dignitaries was here laid aside, and in several prelatical houses the mitre was so mingled with the cockade, and the glass circulated so freely, that I perceived the spirit of conviviality was by no means excluded from the pale of the church of Ireland...

Primate Stone was at that time in the zenith of his power; he had a great following; his intellect was as strong as ever, but his constitution was in its waine. I had frequent occasions to resort to him, and much reason to speak highly of his candour and condescension. No man faced difficulties with greater courage, none overcame them with more address: he was formed to hold command over turbulent spirits in tempestuous seasons; for if he could not absolutely rule the passions of men, he could artfully rule men by the medium of their passions; he had great suavity of manners when points were to be carried by insinuation and finesse; but if authority was necessarily to be enforced, none could hold it with a higher hand: he was an elegant scho-

lar, a consummate politician, a very fine gentleman, and in every character seen to more advantage than in that, which according to his sacred function should have been his chief and only object to sustain.

Doctor Robinson was by Lord Halifax translated from the see of Ferns to that of Kildare. I had even then a presentiment that we were forwarding his advancement towards the primacy, and persuaded myself that the successor of Stone would be found in the person of the Bishop of Kildare. Of him I shall probably have occasion to speak more at large hereafter, for the acquaintance, which I had the honour to form with him at this time, was in the further course of it ripened into friendship and an intimacy, which he never suffered to abate, and I prized too highly to neglect.

I made but one short excursion from Dublin, and this was to the house of that gallant officer Colonel Ford, who perished in his passage to India, and who was married to a relation of my wife. Having established his fame in the battle of Plassey and several other actions, he seated himself at Johnstown in the centre of an inveterate bog, but the soil, such

as it was, had the recommendation to him of being his native soil, and all its deformities vanished from his sight.

I had more than once the amusement of dining at the house of that most singular being George Faulkner, where I found myself in a company so miscellaneously and whimsically classed, that it looked more like a fortuitous concourse of oddities, jumbled together from all ranks, orders and descriptions, than the effect of invitation and design. Description must fall short in the attempt to convey any sketch of that eccentric being to those, who have not read him in the notes of Jephson, or seen him in the mimickry of Foote, who in his portraits of Faulkner found the only sitter, whom his extravagant pencil could not caricature; for he had a solemn intrepidity of egotism, and a daring contempt of absurdity, that fairly outfaced imitation, and like Garrick's Ode on Shakespear, which Johnson said "defied criticism," so did George in the original spirit of his own perfect buffoonery defy caricature. He never deigned to join in the laugh he had raised, nor seemed to have a feeling of the ridicule he had provoked: at

the same time that he was pre-eminently and by preference the butt and buffoon of the company, he could find openings and opportunities for hits of retaliation, which were such left-handed thrusts as few could parry: nobody could foresee where they would fall, nobody of course was fore-armed, and as there was in his calculation but one supereminent character in the kingdom of Ireland, and he the printer of the Dublin Journal, rank was no shield against George's arrows, which flew where he listed, and fixed or missed as chance directed, he cared not about consequences.—He gave good meat and excellent claret in abundance; I sate at his table once from dinner till two in the morning, whilst George swallowed immense potations with one solitary sodden strawberry at the bottom of the glass, which he said was recommended to him by his doctor for its cooling properties. He never lost his recollection or equilibrium the whole time, and was in excellent foolery; it was a singular coincidence, that there was a person in company, who had received his reprieve at the gallows, and the very judge, who had passed sentence of death upon him. This did

not in the least disturb the harmony of the society, nor embarrass any human creature present. All went off perfectly smooth, and George, adverting to an original portrait of Dean Swift, which hung in his room, told us abundance of excellent and interesting anecdotes of the Dean and himself with minute precision and an importance irresistibly ludicrous. There was also a portrait of his late lady Mrs. Faulkner, which either made the painter or George a liar, for it was frightfully ugly, whilst he swore she was the most divine object in creation. In the mean time he took credit to himself for a few deviations in point of gallantry, and asserted that he broke his leg in flying from the fury of an enraged husband, whilst Foote constantly maintained that he fell down an area with a tray of meat upon his shoulder, when he was journeyman to a butcher: I believe neither of them spoke the truth. George prosecuted Foote for lampooning him on the stage of Dublin; his counsel the prime serjeant compared him to Socrates and his libeller to Aristophanes'; this I believe was all that George got by his course of law; but he was told he had the best of the bargain in the

comparison, and sate down contented under the shadow of his laurels. In process of time he became an alderman; I paid my court to him in that character, but I thought he was rather marred than mended by his dignity. George grew grave and sentimental, and sentiment and gravity sate as ill upon George, as a gown and square cap would upon a monkey.

Mrs. Dancer, then in her prime and very beautiful, was acting with Barry at the Crow-Street theatre, and Miss Elliot, who had played in Mr. Bentley's *Wishes*, came over with the recommendation of Mr. Arthur Murphy, who interested himself much in her success. This young uneducated girl had great natural talents, and played the part of Maria in her patron's farce of The Citizen with admirable spirit and effect. The whimsical mock-opera of Midas was first brought upon the Dublin stage in this season, and had all the protection, which the castle patronage could bestow, and that could not be more than its pleasantry and originality deserved.

When the time for our departure was in near approach, the Lord Lieutenant expressed his wish that I would take the conduct of his

daughters and the ladies of his family on their journey home, whilst he went forward, and would expect us at Bushy Park. Circumstanced as I was, I could not undertake the charge of his family without abandoning that of my own, which I did with the utmost regret, though my brother in law Captain Ridge kindly offered himself to conduct his sister and her infant to the place of their destination, and accordingly embarked with them in a packet for Holyhead some days before my departure. Painful as this parting was, I had yet the consolation of surrendering those objects of my affection to the care of him, whom I would have chosen out of all men living for the trust. They were to repose for a few days at a house called Tyringham, within a short distance of Newport Pagnell, which I had taken of the heir of the Bakewell family. It was a large and venerable old mansion, situated on the banks of the river Ouse, and had caught my eye as I was on my road to Ireland: understanding it was furnished and to be let, I crossed the river, and in a few minutes conversation with the steward agreed to take it, and in this I was in some degree biassed by the

consideration of its near neighbourhood to Lord Halifax at Horton. It was a hasty bargain, but one of the cheapest ever made, and I had no occasion at any time after to repent of it.

When we arrived at Bushey Park, and I had surrendered my charge to Lord Halifax, I lost no further time, but hastened to my wife, who was then in Hampshire at her father's, where the children we left behind us had been kindly harboured: them indeed I found in perfect health, but that and every other joy attendant on my return was at once extinguished in the afflicting persuasion, that I had only arrived in time to take a last leave of my dying wife, who was then in the crisis of a most violent fever, exhausted, speechless and scarce alive. Many florid writers would seize the opportunity of describing scenes of this sort; I shall decline it. It was my happy lot to see her excellent constitution surmount the shock, and to witness her recovery in her native air by the blessing of Providence and the unwearied attentions of her hospitable parents. As soon as she was re-established in her health, we removed with our children to Tyringham, where my wife had left her infant fellow traveller in

the care of an excellent young woman, who from the day of our marriage to the day of her death lived with me and my family, faithfully attached and strictly fulfilling every part of her duty.

A short time before Lord Halifax quitted the government of Ireland, in which he was succeeded by the Duke of Northumberland, a vacancy happened in the bench of bishops, and my father was promoted to the see of Clonfert. This vacancy fell so close upon the expiration of Lord Halifax's government, that great efforts were made and considerable interest exerted to wrest the nomination out of his lordship's patronage, and throw it into the disposal of his successor; it was proposed to recompense my father by preferment of some other description; but this was firmly resisted by Lord Halifax, and the mitre was bestowed upon one, who wore it to the last hour of his life with unblemished reputation, honoured, beloved, and I may say (almost without a figure) adored by the people of Ireland for his benevolence, his equity, his integrity and every virtue, that could make him dear to his fellow-creatures, and acceptable to his Creator.

The expectant, who, if I was rightly informed, would have obtained the bishopric of Clonfert in the event of my father's being deprived of it, has had reason to felicitate himself on his disappointment, if, as I just now observed, I am not mistaken in believing Doctor Markham was the person, whose happy destiny sent my father to Ireland, and reserved him for better fortune at home, and higher dignities most worthily bestowed and most honourably enjoyed.

My father in the mean time had returned to his vicarage of Fulham, and sate down without repining at the issue of his expedition, which now seemed to close upon him without any prospect of success, when I hastened to impart to him the intelligence I had just received from Secretary Hamilton, whom I had accidentally crossed upon in Parliament-Street. He received it in his calm manner, modestly remarking, that his talents were not turned to public life, nor did he foresee any material advantages likely to accrue to such as belonged to him from his promotion to an Irish bishopric; it was not consistent, he said, with his principles to avail himself of his patronage

in that country to the exclusion of the clergy of his diocese, and of course he must deny himself the gratification of serving his friends and relations in England, if any such should solicit him. This did happen in more instances than one, and I can witness with what pain he withstood requests, which he would have been so happy to have complied with; but his conscience was a rule to him, and he never deviated from it in a single instance. He further observed in the course of this conversation with me what I have before noticed in my remarks upon Bishop Cumberland's appropriation of his episcopal revenue, and, alluding to that rule as laid down by his grandfather, expressed his approbation of it, and said, that though he could not aspire to the most distant comparison with him in greater matters, yet he trusted he should not be found degenerate in principle; and certainly he did not trust in himself without reason. In conclusion he said, that having visited Ireland, and formed many pleasing and respectable connexions there, he would quietly wait the event without embarrassing Lord Halifax with any solicitation, and when he thought he perceived me in a disposi-

tion to be not quite so tranquil and sedentary in the business, he positively forbade me to make any stir, or give Lord Halifax any trouble on his account—"You have shewn your "moderation," added he, "in declining the "title, that was offered to you; let me at least be- "tray no eagerness in courting that, which may, "or may not, devolve upon me. Had it not been "for you it would never have come under my "contemplation; I should still have remained "parson of Stanwick, but the same circum- "stances, that have drawn you from your stu- "dies, have taken me from my solitude, and if "you are thus zealous to transport me and your "mother into another kingdom, I hope you "will be not less solicitous to visit and console "us with the sight of you, when we are there."

I bless God I have not to reproach myself with neglecting this tender and paternal injunction. Not a year passed during my father's residence in Ireland that I did not happily devote some months of it to the fulfilment of this duty, always accompanied by my wife, and, with the exception of one time only, by some part of my young family.

In a few days after this conversation I was

authorized to announce to my father his nomination to the bishopric of Clonfert. He lost no time in arranging his affairs, and preparing for his departure with my mother and my younger sister, then unmarried. Lord Halifax in the mean time had received the Seals of Secretary of State; he had to name one Under-Secretary and his choice fell upon a gentleman of the name of Sedgewicke, who had attended upon him to Ireland in the capacity of Master of the Horse, and on this promotion vacated an employ, which he held in the Office of Trade and Plantations under the denomination of Clerk of the Reports. He was a civil, mannerly, and, as far as suited him, an obsequious little gentleman; fond of business, and very busy in it, be it what it might; his training had been in office, and his education stamped his character with marks, that could not be mistaken; he well knew how to follow up preferment to its source, and though the waters of that spring were not very pure, he drank devoutly at the fountain head, and was rewarded for his perseverance.

I could not be said to suffer any disappointment on the occasion of this gentleman's pro-

motion: I had due warning of the alternative, that presented itself to my choice. I had a holding on Lord Halifax, founded on my father's merits, and a long and faithful attachment on my own part; but as I had hitherto kept the straight and fair track in following his fortunes, I would not consent to deviate into indirect roads, and disgrace myself in the eyes of his and my own connexions, who would have marked my conduct with deserved contempt. In attending upon him to Ireland I had the example of Doctor Crane to refer to, and I had his advice and approbation on this occasion for tendering my services, when he received the seals, as a point of duty, though not with any expectation of my tender being accepted. The answer was exactly what I looked to receive—cool in its terms, repulsive in its purport—*I was not fit for every situation*—Nothing could be more true, neither did I oppose a single word to the conviction it carried with it: in that I acquiesced respectfully and silently; but I said a few words in thankful acknowledgment of the favour he had conferred upon my father, and for that, which I had received in my own person, namely the

Crown-Agency of Nova Scotia. Perhaps he did not quite expect to have disposed of me with so little trouble to himself, for my manner seemed to waken some sensations, which led him to dilate a little on his motives for declining to employ me, inasmuch as I did not speak French. This also was not less true than his first remark, for as certainly as I was not fit for all situations, so surely was I unfit for this, if speaking French fluently, (though I understood it as a language) was a qualification not to be dispensed with. In short I admitted this objection in its full force, well persuaded, that if I had possessed the elegance and perfection of Voltaire himself in that language, I should not have been a step nearer to the office in question. When we know ourselves to be put aside for reasons, that do not touch the character, but will not truly be revealed, we do well to acquiesce in the very first civil, though evasive, apology, that is passed upon us in the way of explanation.

Finding myself thus cast out of employ, and Mr. Sedgewicke in possession of his office, I began to think it might be worth my while to endeavour at succeeding him in his situation at

the Board of Trade, and submit to follow him, as he had once followed and now passed me in this road to preferment. After above eleven years attendance, my profit was the sole attainment of a place of two hundred pounds per annum, my loss was that of the expence I had put my father to for my support and maintenance in a style of life, very different from that in which I was found; this expence I had the consolation of being enabled to replace to my father upon the receipt of my wife's fortune; but by this act of justice and duty so gratifying to my conscience the balance upon 3000*l.* which was the portion allotted to Miss Ridge, was very inconsiderable when it reached me. I had already three children, and the prospect of an increasing family; my father's bishopric was not likely to benefit me, neither could it be considered as a compensation for my services, inasmuch as the past exertions of his influence and popularity in Northamptonshire might fairly give him a claim to a favour not less than that of appointing him second chaplain to Doctor Oswald, who was a perfect stranger to his lordship, till introduced and recommended by his brother James. These con-

siderations induced me to hope I could not be thought a very greedy or presumptuous expectant, when I ventured to solicit him in competition with a gentleman, who had only been in his immediate service as Master of the Horse for one session in Ireland, and at the same time they served as motives with me for endeavouring to succeed that gentleman, whose office, if I could obtain it, would be an addition to my income of two hundred per annum. The Earl of Hillsborough was first Lord of Trade and Plantations, and, being an intimate friend of Lord Halifax, was I presumed not indisposed towards me. I thereupon went to Bushey Park to wait upon Lord Halifax, and communicated to him the idea, which had occurred to me, of making suit for the office, that Mr. Sedgewicke had vacated. He received this intimation in a manner, that did not merely denote embarrassment, it made it doubtful to me whether he meant to take it up as matter of offence, or turn it off as matter of indifference; for some time he seemed inclined to put an interpretation upon the measure proposed, which certainly it could not bear, and to consider it as an abandonment on my part of a con-

nexion, that had uninterruptedly subsisted for so many years. When a very few words on my part convinced him that this charge could not lie against me, he stated it in another view as a degradation, which he was surprised I could think of submitting to, after the situation I had stood in with respect to him: this was easily answered, and in terms, that could not give offence; thus whilst I was guarding my expressions from any semblance of disgust, and his lordship was holding a language, that could not come from his heart, we broke up the conference without any other decision, than that of referring it to my own choice and discretion, as a measure he neither advised nor opposed.

As it was from this interview with the noble person, to whom I had attached myself for so long a term of years, that my future line in life took a new direction, I could not pass it over in silence; but though my mind retains the memory of many particulars, which, if my own credit only was at stake, I should be forward to relate, I shall forbear; convinced, that when I lost the favour and protection of that noble person, I had not forfeited his real good opi-

nion; of this truth he survived to give, and I to receive, proofs, that could not be mistaken. I had known him too intimately not to know, in the very moment, of which I have been speaking, that what he was by accident, he was not by nature. I am persuaded he was formed to be a good man, he might also have been a great one: his mind was large, his spirit active, his ambition honorable: he had a carriage noble and imposing; his first approach attracted notice, his consequent address ensured respect: if his talents were not quite so solid as some, nor altogether so deep as others, yet they were brilliant, popular and made to glitter in the eyes of men: splendor was his passion; his good fortune threw opportunities in his way to have supported it; his ill fortune blasted all those energies, which should have been reserved for the crisis of his public fame; the first offices of the state, the highest honours, which his sovereign could bestow, were showered upon him, when the spring of his mind was broken, and his genius, like a vessel overloaded with treasure, but far gone in decay, was only precipitated to ruin by the very freight, that in its

better days would have crowned it with prosperity and riches.

I now addressed a letter to the Earl of Hillsborough, tendering my humble services in Mr. Sedgewicke's room, and was accepted without hesitation. Thus I entered upon an office, the duties of which consisted of taking minutes of the debates and proceedings at the Board, and preparing for their approbation and signature such reports, as they should direct to be drawn up for his Majesty, or the Council, and, on some occasions, for the Board of Treasury, or Secretaries of State. It was at most an office of no great labour, but as Mr. Pownall, now actual Secretary, was much in the habit of digesting these reports himself, my task was greatly lightened, and I had leisure to address myself to other studies, and indulge my propensities towards composition in whatever way they might incline me to employ them.

Bickerstaff having at this time brought out his operas of *Love in a Village* and *The Maid of the Mill* with great success, some friends persuaded me to attempt a drama of that sort, and engaged Simpson, conductor of the band

at Covent Garden and a performer on the hautboy, to compile the airs and adapt them to the stage. With very little knowledge of stage-effect, and as little forethought about plot, incident, or character, I sate down to write, and soon produced a thing in three acts, which I named the Summer's Tale, though it was a tale about nothing and very indifferently told; however, being a vehicle for some songs, not despicably written, and some of these very well set, it was carried by my friends to Beard, then manager of the theatre, and accepted for representation. My friends, who were critics merely in music, took as little concern about revising the drama, as I took pains in writing it: they brought me the music of old songs, and I adapted words to it, and wove them into the piece, as I could. I saw however how very ill this plan was adapted for any credit, that could be expected to accrue to me from my share in it, and to mark how little confidence I placed in the composition of the drama, I affixed as motto to the title page the following words—*Vox, et præterea nihil.*— Abel furnished the overture, Bach, Doctor Arne and Arnold supplied some original com-

positions; Beard, Miss Brent, (then in high reputation) Mr. and Mrs. Mattocks and Shuter filled the principal characters. It was performed nine or ten nights to moderate houses without opposition, and very deservedly without much applause, except what the execution of the vocal performers, and some brilliant compositions justly obtained; but even with these it was rather over-loaded, and was not sufficiently contrasted and relieved by familiar airs.

The fund for the support of decayed actors being then recently established by the company of Covent Garden theatre, I appropriated the receipts of my ninth night to that benevolent institution, which the conductors were pleased to receive with much good will, and have honoured me with their remembrance at their annual audits ever since.

The Summer's Tale was published by Mr. Dodsley, and as I received no complaint from him on account of the sale, I hope that liberal purchaser of the copy had no particular reason to be discontented with his bargain.

Bickerstaff, who had established himself in the public favour by the success of his operas

above-mentioned, seemed to consider me as an intruder upon his province, with whom he was to keep no terms, and he set all engines of abuse to work upon me and my poor drama, whilst it was yet in rehearsal, not repressing his acrimony till it had been before the public; when to have discussed it in the spirit of fair criticism might have afforded him full matter of triumph, without convicting him of any previous malice or personality against an unoffending author. I was no sooner put in possession of the proofs, against him, which were exceedingly gross, than I remonstrated by letter to him against his uncandid proceeding; I have no copy of that letter; I wish I had preserved it, as it would be in proof to show that my disposition to live in harmony with my contemporaries was, at my very outset as a writer for the stage, what it has uniformly been to the present hour, and that, although this attack was one of the most virulent and unfair ever made upon me, yet I no otherwise appealed against it, than by telling him, "That "if his contempt of my performance was real- "ly what he professed it to be, he had no need "to fear me as a rival, and might relax from

"his intemperance; on the contrary, if alarm "for his own interest had any share in the mo- "tives for his animosity, I was perfectly ready "to purchase his peace of mind and good will "by the sacrifice of those emoluments, which "might eventually accrue from my nights, in "any such way as might relieve his anxiety, "and convince him of my entire disinterested- "ness in commencing author; adding in con- "clusion, that he might assure himself he "would never hear of me again as a writer of "operas." This I can perfectly recollect was the purport of my letter, which I dictated in the belief of what was reported to me as an apology for his conduct, and entirely ascribed his hostility to his alarm on the score of interest, and not to the evil temper of his mind.—This was the interpretation I put upon what Mr. Bickerstaff had written of me, and my real motive for what I wrote to him: I understood he was wholly dependant on the stage, and that the necessity of his circumstances made him bitter against any one, who stept forward to divide the favour of the public with him. To insult his poverty, or presume on my advantage over him in respect of circum-

stances, was a thought, that never found admission to my heart, nor did Bickerstaff himself so construe my letter, or suspect me of such baseness; for Mr. Garrick afterwards informed me that Bickerstaff shewed this letter to him as an appeal to his feelings of such a nature, as ought to put him to silence; and when Mr. Garrick represented to him, that he also saw it in that light, he did not scruple to confess that his attack had been unfair, and that he should never repeat it against me or my productions. I led him into no further temptations, for whilst he continued to supply the stage with musical pieces, I turned my thoughts to dramas of another cast, and we interfered no longer with each other's labours.

One day as I was leaving the theatre after a rehearsal of the Summer's Tale, I was met by Mr. Smith, then engaged at Covent Garden, and whom I had known at the University, as an Under-graduate of Saint John's College. We had of course some conversation, during which he had the kindness to remonstrate with me upon the business I was engaged in, politely saying, that I ought to turn my talents to compositions of a more in-

dependent and a higher character; predicting to me, that I should reap neither fame nor satisfaction in the operatic department, and demanding of me, in a tone of encouragement, why I would not rather aim at writing a good comedy, than dabbling in these sing-song pieces. The animating spirit of this friendly remonstrance, and the full persuasion that he predicted truly of the character and consequences of my undertaking then on foot, made a sensible impression on my mind, and in the warmth of the moment I formed my resolution to attempt the arduous project he had pointed out. If my old friend and contemporary ever reads this page, perhaps he can call to mind the conversation I allude to; though he has not the same reasons to keep in his remembrance this circumstance, as I have, who was the party favoured and obliged, yet I hope he will at all events believe that I record it truly as to the fact, and gratefully for the effects of it. As his friend, I have lived with him, and shared his gentlemanly hospitality; as his author, I have witnessed his abilities, and profited by his support; and though I have lost sight of him ever since his retirement from

the stage, yet I have ever retained at heart an interest in his welfare, and as he and I are too nearly of an age to flatter ourselves, that we have any very long continuance to come upon the stage of this life, I beg leave to make this public profession of my sincere regard for him, and to pay the tribute of my plaudits now before he makes his final exit, and the curtain drops.

Before I had ushered my melodious nonsense to the audience, I had clearly discovered the weakness of the tame and lifeless fable, on which I had founded it: there were still some scenes between the characters of Henry and Amelia, which were tolerably conceived, and had preserved themselves a place in the good opinion of the audience by the simplicity of the style, and the address of Mrs. Mattocks and Mr. Dyer; to whom those parts were allotted. It was thereupon thought adviseable to cut down the Summer's Tale to an afterpiece of two acts, and exhibit it in the next season under the title of Amelia. In this state it stood its ground, and took its turn with very tolerable success "behind the foremost and be-"fore the last." Simpson published the music

in a collection, and I believe he got home pretty well upon the sale of it. The good judges of that time thought it good music, but the better judges of this time would probably think it good for nothing.

In the summer of this year, as soon as the Board of Trade broke up for their usual recess, I went with my wife and part of my young family to pay my duty and fulfil my promise to my father and mother in Ireland. They waited for us in Dublin, where my father had taken the late Bishop of Meath's house in Kildare-Street, next door to the Duke of Leinster's. When we had reposed ourselves for a few days, after the fatigues of a turbulent passage, we all set off for Clonfert in the county of Galway. Every body, who has travelled in Ireland, and witnessed the wretched accommodation of the inns, particularly in the west, knows that it requires some forecast and preparation to conduct a large family on their journey. It certainly is as different from travelling in England as possible, and not much unlike travelling in Spain; but with my father for our provider, whose appointments of servants and equipage were ever excellent, we

could feel few wants, and arrived in good time at our journey's end, where upon the banks of the great river Shannon, in a nook of land, on all sides save one surrounded by an impassable bog, we found the episcopal residence, by courtesy called palace, and the church of Clonfert, by custom called cathedral. This humble residence was not devoid of comfort and convenience, for it contained some tolerable lodging rooms, and was capacious enough to receive me and mine without straitening the family. A garden of seven acres, well planted and disposed into pleasant walks, kept in the neatest order, was attached to the house, and at the extremity of a broad gravel walk in front stood the cathedral. Within this boundary the scene was cheerful; all without it was either impenetrable bog, or a dreary undressed country; but whilst all was harmony, hospitality and affection underneath the parental roof, "the mind was its own place," and every hour was happy. My father lived, as he had ever done, beloved by all around him; the same benevolent and generous spirit, which had endeared him to his neighbours and parishioners in England, now began to make the like im-

pressions on the hearts of a people as far different in character, as they were distant in place, from those, whom he had till now been concerned with. Without descending from the dignity he had to support, and condescending to any of the paltry modes of courting popularity, I instantly perceived how high he stood in their esteem; these observations I was perfectly in the way to make, for I had no forms to keep, and was withal uncommonly delighted with their wild eccentric humours, mixing with all ranks and descriptions of men, to my infinite amusement. If I have been successful in my dramatic sketches of the Irish character, it was here I studied it in its purest and most primitive state; from high to low it was now under my view. Though I strove to present it in its fairest and best light upon the stage, truth obliges me to confess there was another side of the picture, which could not have been contemplated without affright and horror! Atrocities and violences, which set all law and justice at defiance, were occasionally committed in this savage and licentious quarter, and suffered to pass over with impunity. In the neighbouring town of Eyre

Court, they had by long usage assumed to themselves certain local and self-constituted privileges and exemptions, which rendered it unapproachable by any officers or emissaries of the civil power, who were universally denounced as mad-dogs, and subjected to be treated as such, and even put to death with as little ceremony or remorse. I speak of what actually occurred within my own immediate knowledge, whilst I resided with my father, in more instances than one, and those instances would be shocking to relate. To stem these daring outrages, and to stand in opposition to these barbarous customs, was an undertaking, that demanded both philanthropy and courage, and my father of course was the very man to attempt it. Justice and generosity were the instruments he employed, and I saw the work of reformation so auspiciously begun, and so steadily pursued by him, as convinced me that minds the most degenerate may be to a degree reclaimed by actions, that come home to their feelings, and are evidently directed to the sole purposes of amending their manners, and improving their condition. To suppose they were a race of beings stupidly vicious, devoid

of sensibility, and delivered over by their natural inertness to barbarism and ignorance, would be the very falsest character that could be conceived of them; it is on the contrary to the quickness of their apprehensive faculties, to the precipitancy and unrestrained vivacity of their talents and passions, that we must look for the causes, and in some degree for the excuse of their excesses: together with their ferocious propensities there are blended and compounded humours so truly comic, eccentricities so peculiar, and attachments and affections at times so inconceivably ardent, that it is not possible to contemplate them in their natural characters without being diverted by extravagancies, which we cannot seriously approve, and captivated by professions, which we cannot implicitly give credit to.

The bishop held a considerable parcel of land, arable and grazing, in his hands, or more properly speaking in the phrase of the country, a large demesne, with a numerous tribe of labourers, gardeners, turf-cutters, herdsmen and handicraft-men of various denominations.—His first object, and that not an easy one to attain, was to induce them to pursue the same

methods of husbandry as were practised in England, and to observe the same neat and cleanly course of cultivation. This was a great point gained; they began it with unwillingness, and watched it with suspicion: their idle neighbours, who were without employ, ridiculed the work, and predicted that their hay stacks would take fire, and their corn be rendered unfit for use; but in the further course of time, when they experienced the advantages of this process, and witnessed the striking contrast of these productive lands, compared with the slovenly grounds around them, they began to acknowledge their own errors, and to reform them. With these operations the improvements of their own habitations were contrived to keep pace: their cabins soon wore a more comfortable and decent appearance; they furnished them with chimnies, and emerged out of the smoke, in which they had buried and suffocated their families and themselves. When these old habits were corrected within doors, on the outside of every one of them there was to be seen a stack of hay, made in the English fashion, thatched and secured from the weather, and a lot of potatoes, care-

fully planted and kept clean, which, with a suitable proportion of turf, secured the year's provision both for man and beast. When these comforts were placed in their view, they were easily led to turn their attention to the better appearance of their persons, and this reform was not a little furthered by the premium of a Sunday's dinner to all, who should present themselves in clean linen and with well-combed hair, without the customary addition of a scare-crow wig, so that the swarthy Milesian no longer appeared with a yellow wig upon his coal-black hair, nor the yellow Dane with a coal-black wig upon his long red locks: the old barbarous custom also of working in a great coat looscly thrown over the shoulders, with the sleeves dangling by the sides, was now dismissed, and the bishop's labourers turned into the field, stript to their shirts, proud to shew themselves in whole linen, so that, in them vanity operated as a virtue, and piqued them to excel in industry as much as they did in appearance. As for me, I was so delighted with contemplating a kind of new creation, of which my father was the author, that I devoted the greatest portion of my time to his

works, and had full powers to prosecute his good intentions to whatever extent I might find opportunities for carrying them. This commission was to me most gratifying, nor have any hours in my past life been more truly satisfactory, than those in which I was thus occupied as the administrator of his unbounded benevolence to his dependant fellow creatures. My father, being one of the governors of the Linen Board, availed himself also of the opportunity for introducing a branch of that valuable manufacture into his neighbourhood, and a great number of spinning-wheels were distributed, and much good linen made in consequence of that measure. The superintendance of this improving manufacture furnished an interesting occupation to my mother's active mind, and it flourished under her care.

In the month of October my father removed his family to Dublin, and from thence I returned to resume my official duty at the Board of Trade. In the course of this winter I brought out my first comedy, entitled *The Brothers*, at Covent Garden theatre, then under the direction of Mr. Harris and his associates, joint proprietors with him. I had

written this play, after my desultory manner, at such short periods of time and leisure, as I could snatch from business or the society of my family, and sometimes even in the midst of both, for I could then form whole scenes in my memory, and afterwards write them down, when opportunity offered; neither was it any interruption, if my children were playing about me in the room. I believe I was indebted to Mr. Harris singly for the kind reception, which this offer met; for if I rightly remember what passed on that occasion, my *Brothers* were not equally acceptable to his brethren as to him. He took it however with all its responsibility, supported it and cast it with the best strength of his company. Woodward in the part of Ironsides, and Yates in that of Sir Benjamin Dove, were actors, that could keep their scene alive, if any life was in it: Quick, then a young performer, took the part of Skiff, and my friend Smith, who had prompted me to the undertaking, was the young man of the piece; Mrs. Green performed Lady Dove, and Mrs. Yates was the heroine Sophia.

The play was successful, and I believe I may

say that it brought some advantage to the theatre as well as some reputation to its author. It has been much played on the provincial stages, and occasionally revived on the royal ones. There are still such excellent successors in the lines of Yates and Woodward to be found in both theatres, that perhaps it would not even now be a loss of labour, if they took it up afresh. I recollect that I borrowed the hint of Sir Benjamin's assumed valour upon being forced into a rencounter from one of the old comedies, and if I conjecture rightly it is *The Little French Lawyer*. It may be said of this comedy, as it may of most, it has some merits and some faults; it has its scenes that tell, and its scenes that tire; a start of character, such as that of the tame Sir Benjamin, is always a striking incident in the construction of a drama, and when a revolution of that sort can be brought about without violence to nature, and for purposes essential to the plot, it is a point of art well worthy the attention and study of a writer for the stage. The comedy of *Rule a Wife and have a Wife*, and particularly that of Massinger's *City Madam*, are strong instances in point. It is to be wished

that some man of experience in stage effect would adapt the latter of these comedies to representation.

Garrick was in the house at the first night of The Brothers, and as I was planted in the back seat of an upper box opposite to where he sate, I could not but remark his action of surprise when Mrs. Yates opened the epilogue with the following lines—

> "Who but hath seen the celebrated strife,
> "Where Reynolds calls the canvass into life,
> "And 'twixt the tragic and the comic muse,
> "Courted of both, and dubious where to chuse,
> "Th' immortal actor stands—?

My friend Fitzherbert, father of Lord St. Helen, was then with Garrick, and came from his box to me across the house to tell me, that the *immortal actor* had been taken by surprise, but was not displeased with the unexpected compliment from an author, with whom he had supposed he did not stand upon the best terms; alluding no doubt to his transaction with Lord Halifax respecting The Banishment of Cicero. From this time Mr. Garrick took pains to cultivate an acquaintance, which he had hitherto neglected, and after Mr. Fitz-

herbert had brought us together at his house, we interchanged visits, and it is nothing more than natural to confess I was charmed with his company and flattered by his attentions. I had a house in Queen-Ann-Street, and he then lived in Southampton-Street Covent Garden, where I frequently went to him and sometimes accompanied him to his pleasant villa at Hampton. In the mean time, whilst I was thus fortunate in conciliating to myself one eminent person by my epilogue, I soon discovered to my regret how many I had offended by my prologue. A host of newspaper-writers fell upon me for the pertness and general satire of that incautious composition, and I found myself assailed from various quarters with unmitigated acrimony. I made no defence, and the only one I had to make would hardly have brought me off, for I could have opposed nothing to their charge against me, but the simple and sincere assertion that I alluded personally to no man, and being little versed in the mock-modesty of modern addresses to the audience, took the old style of prologue for my model, and put a bold countenance upon a bold adventure. Numerous examples were be-

fore me of prologues arrogant in the extreme; Johnson abounds in such instances, but I did not advert sufficiently to the change, which time had wrought in the circumstances of the dramatic poet, and how much it behoved him to lower his tone in the hearing of his audience: neither did Smith, who was speaker of the prologue, and an experienced actor, warn me of any danger in the lines he undertook to deliver. In short mine was the error of inexperience, and their efforts to rebuff me only gave a fresh spring to my exertions, for I can truly say, that, although I have been annoyed by detraction, it never had the property of depressing me. I was silly enough to send this comedy into the world with a dedication to the Duke of Grafton, a man, with whom I had not the slightest acquaintance, nor did I seek to establish any upon the merit of this address: he was Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, and this was my sole motive for inscribing my first comedy to him. As for the play itself, whilst the prologue and the prologue's author run the gauntlet, that kept possession of the stage, and Woodward and Yates lost no credit by the support they gave it.

I will not trouble the reader with many apologies or appeals, yet just now whilst I am beginning to introduce a long list of dramas, such as I presume no English author has yet equalled *in point of number*, I would fain intercede for a candid interpretation of my labours, and recommend my memory to posterity for protection after death from those unhandsome cavils, which I have patiently endured whilst living.

I am not to learn that dramatic authors are to arm themselves with fortitude before they take a post so open to attack; they, who are to act in the public eye, and speak in the public ear, have no right to expect a very smooth and peaceful career. I have had my full share of success, and I trust I have paid my tax for it always without mutiny, and very generally without murmuring. I have never irritated the town by making a sturdy stand against their opposition, when they have been pleased to point it against any one of my productions: I never failed to withdraw myself on the very first intimation that I was unwelcome, and the only offence I have been guilty of is, that I have not always thought the worse of a composition only because the public did not think well of

it. I solemnly protest that I have never written, or caused to be written, a single line to puff and praise myself, or to decry a brother dramatist, since I had life; of all such anonymous and mean manœuvres I am clearly innocent and proudly disdainful; I have stood firm for the corps, into which I enrolled myself, and never disgraced my colours by abandoning the cause of the *legitimate comedy*, to whose service I am sworn, and in whose defence I have kept the field for nearly half a century, till at last I have survived all true national taste, and lived to see buffoonery, spectacle and puerility so effectually triumph, that now to be repulsed from the stage is to be recommended to the closet, and to be applauded by the theatre is little else than a passport to the puppet-show. I only say what every body knows to be true: I do not write from personal motives, for I have no more cause for complaint than is common to many of my brethren of the corps. It is not my single misfortune to have been accused of vanity, which I did not feel, of satires, which I did not write, and of invectives, which I disdained even to meditate. It stands recorded of me in a review to

this hour, that on the first night of *The School for Scandal* I was overheard in the lobby endeavouring to decry and cavil at that excellent comedy: I gave my accuser proof positive, that I was at Bath during the time of its first run, never saw it during its first season, and exhibited my pocket-journal in confirmation of my alibi: the gentleman was convinced of my innocence, but as he had no opportunity of correcting his libel, every body that read it remains convinced of my guilt. Now as none, who ever heard my name, will fail to suppose I must have said what is imputed to me in bitterness of heart, not from defect in head, this false aspersion of my character was cruel and injurious in the extreme. I hold it right to explain that the reviewer I am speaking of has been long since dead.

In the ensuing year I again paid a visit to my father at Clonfert, and there in a little closet at the back of the palace, as it was called, unfurnished and out of use, with no other prospect from my single window but that of a turf-stack, with which it was almost in contact, I seated myself by choice, and began to plan and compose *The West Indian*.

As the writer for the stage is a writer to the passions, I hold it matter of conscience and duty in the dramatic poet to reserve his brightest colouring for the best characters, to give no false attractions to vice and immorality, but to endeavour, as far as is consistent with that contrast, which is the very essence of his art, to turn the fairer side of human nature to the public, and, as much as in him lies, to contrive so as to put men in good humour with one another. Let him therefore in the first place strive to make worthy characters amiable, but take great care not to make them insipid; if he does not put life and spirit into his man or woman of virtue, and render them entertaining as well as good, their morality is not a whit more attractive than the morality of a Greek chorus. He had better have let them alone altogether.

Congreve, Farquhar, and some others have made vice and villany so playful and amusing, that either they could not find in their hearts to punish them, or not caring how wicked they were, so long as they were witty, paid no attention to what became of them: Shadwell's comedy is little better than a brothel. Poetical

justice, which has armed the tragic poet with the weapons of death, and commissioned him to wash out the offence in the blood of the offender, has not left the comic writer without his instruments of vengeance; for surely, if he knows how to employ the authority that is in him, the scourge of ridicule alone is sharp enough for the chastisement of any crimes, which can fall within his province to exhibit. A true poet knows that unless he can produce works, whose fame will outlive him, he will outlive both his works and his fame; therefore every comic author who takes the mere clack of the day for his subject, and abandons all his claim upon posterity, is no true poet; if he dabbles in personalities, he does considerably worse. When I began therefore, as at this time, to write for the stage, my ambition was to aim at writing something that might be lasting and outlive me; when temporary subjects were suggested to me, I declined them: I formed to myself in idea what I conceived to be the character of a legitimate comedy, and that alone was my object, and though I did not quite aspire to attain, I was not altogether in despair of approaching it. I perceived that I had

fallen upon a time, when great eccentricity of character was pretty nearly gone by, but still I fancied there was an opening for some originality, and an opportunity for shewing at least my good will to mankind, if I introduced the characters of persons, who had been usually exhibited on the stage, as the butts for ridicule and abuse, and endeavoured to present them in such lights, as might tend to reconcile the world to them, and them to the world. I thereupon looked into society for the purpose of discovering such as were the victims of its national, professional or religious prejudices; in short for those suffering characters, which stood in need of an advocate, and out of these I meditated to select and form heroes for my future dramas, of which I would study to make such favourable and reconciliatory delineations, as might incline the spectators to look upon them with pity, and receive them into their good opinion and esteem.

With this project in my mind, and nothing but the turf-stack to call off my attention, I took the characters of an Irishman and a West Indian for the heroes of my plot, and began to work it out into the shape of a comedy. To

the West Indian I devoted a generous spirit, and a vivacious giddy dissipation; I resolved he should love pleasure much, but honour more; but as I could not keep consistency of character without a mixture of failings, when I gave him charity, I gave him that, which can cover a multitude, and thus protected, thus recommended, I thought I might send him out into the world to shift for himself.

For my Irishman I had a scheme rather more complicated; I put him into the Austrian service, and exhibited him in the livery of a foreign master, to impress upon the audience the melancholy and impolitic alternative, to which his religious disqualification had reduced a gallant and a loyal subject of his natural king: I gave him courage, for it belongs to his nation; I endowed him with honour, for it belongs to his profession, and I made him proud, jealous, susceptible, for such the exiled veteran will be, who lives by the earnings of his sword, and is not allowed to draw it in the service of that country, which gave him birth, and which of course he was born to defend: for his phraseology I had the glossary ready at my hand; for his mistakes and trips, vulgarly called bulls, I

did not know the Irishman of the stage then existing, whom I would wish to make my model: their gross absurdities, and unnatural contrarieties have not a shade of character in them. When his imagination is warmed, and his ideas rush upon him in a cluster, 'tis then the Irishman will sometimes blunder; his fancy having supplied more words than his tongue can well dispose of, it will occasionally trip. But the imitation must be delicately conducted; his meaning is clear, he conceives rightly, though in delivery he is confused; and the art, as I conceive it, of finding language for the Irish character on the stage consists not in making him foolish, vulgar or absurd, but on the contrary, whilst you furnish him with expressions, that excite laughter, you must graft them upon sentiments, that deserve applause.

In all my hours of study it has been through life my object so to locate myself as to have little or nothing to distract my attention, and therefore brilliant rooms or pleasant prospects I have ever avoided. A dead wall, or, as in the present case, an Irish turf-stack, are not attractions, that can call off the fancy from its pursuits; and whilst in those pursuits it can

find interest and occupation, it wants no outward aids to cheer it. My mother, who had a fellow-feeling with me in these sensations, used occasionally to visit me in this hiding hole, and animated me with her remarks upon the progress of my work: my father was rather inclined to apologize for the meanness of my accommodation, and I believe rather wondered at my choice: in the mean time I had none of those incessant avocations, which for ever crossed me in the writing of The Brothers. I was master of my time, my mind was free, and I was happy in the society of the dearest friends I had on earth. In parents, sister, wife and children greater blessings no man could enjoy. The calls of office, the cavillings of angry rivals, and the jibings of news-paper critics could not reach me on the banks of the Shannon, where all within doors was love and affection, all without was gratitude and kindness devolved on me through the merits of my father. In no other period of my life have the same happy circumstances combined to cheer me in any of my literary labours.

During an excursion of a few days upon a visit to Mr. Talbot of Mount Talbot, a very

respectable and worthy gentleman in those parts, I found a kind of hermitage in his pleasure grounds, where I wrote some few scenes, and my amiable host was afterwards pleased to honour the author of The West Indian with an inscription, affixed to that building, commemorating the use, that had been made of it, a piece of elegant flattery very elegantly expressed.

On this visit to Mr. Talbot I was accompanied by Lord Eyre of Eyre Court, a near neighbour and friend of my father. This noble Lord, though pretty far advanced in years, was so correctly indigenous, as never to have been out of Ireland in his life, and not often so far from Eyre Court as in this tour to Mr. Talbot's. Proprietor of a vast extent of soil, not very productive, and inhabiting a spacious mansion, not in the best repair, he lived according to the style of the country with more hospitality than elegance: whilst his table groaned with abundance, the order and good taste of its arrangement were little thought of: the slaughtered ox was hung up whole, and the hungry servitor supplied himself with his dole of flesh, sliced from off the carcase. His

lordship's day was so apportioned as to give the afternoon by much the largest share of it, during which, from an early dinner to the hour of rest, he never left his chair, nor did the claret ever quit the table. This did not produce inebriety, for it was sipping rather than drinking, that filled up the time, and this mechanical process of gradually moistening the human clay was carried on with very little aid from conversation, for his lordship's companions were not very communicative, and fortunately he was not very curious. He lived in an enviable independence as to reading, and of course he had no books. Not one of the windows of his castle was made to open, but luckily he had no liking for fresh air, and the consequence may be better conceived than described.

He had a large and handsome pleasure boat on the Shannon, and men to row it; I was of two or three parties with him on that noble water as far as to Portumna, the then deserted castle of the Lord Clanrickarde. Upon one of these excursions we were hailed by a person from the bank, who somewhat rudely called to us to take him over to the other side. The

company in the boat making no reply, I inadvertently called out—"Aye, aye, Sir! stay "there till we come."—Immediately I heard a murmur in the company, and Lord Eyre said to me—"You'll hear from that gentleman "again, or I am mistaken. You don't know "perhaps that you have been answering one "of the most irritable men alive, and the likeliest to interpret what you have said as an "affront." He predicted truly, for the very next morning the gentleman rode over to Lord Eyre, and demanded of him to give up my name. This his lordship did, but informed him withal that I was a stranger in the country, the son of Bishop Cumberland at Clonfert, where I might be found, if he had any commands for me. He instantly replied, that he should have received it as an affront from any other man, but Bishop Cumberland's was a character he respected, and no son of his could be guilty of an intention to insult him. Thus this valiant gentleman permitted me to live, and only helped me to another feature in my sketch of Major O'Flaherty.

A short time after this, Lord Eyre, who had a great passion for cock-fighting, and whose

cocks were the crack of all Ireland, engaged me in a main at Eyre Court. I was a perfect novice in that elegant sport, but the gentlemen from all parts sent me in their contributions, and having a good feeder I won every battle in the main but one. At this meeting I fell in with my hero from the Shannon bank. Both parties dined together, but when I found that mine, which was the more numerous and infinitely the most obstreperous and disposed to quarrel, could no longer be left in peace with our antagonists, I quitted my seat by Lord Eyre and went to the gentleman above-alluded to, who was presiding at the second table, and seating myself familiarly on the arm of his chair, proposed to him to adjourn our party, and assemble them in another house, for the sake of harmony and good fellowship. With the best grace in life he instantly assented, and when I added that I should put them under his care, and expect from him as a man of honour and my friend, that every mother's son of them should be found forthcoming and alive the next morning—"Then by the soul of me," he replied, "and they shall; provided only that "no man in company shall dare to give *the*

"*glorious and immortal memory* for his toast, "which no gentleman, who feels as I do, will "put up with." To this I pledged myself, and we removed to a whiskey house, attended by half a score pipers, playing different tunes. Here we went on very joyously and lovingly for a time, till a well-dressed gentleman entered the room, and civilly accosting me, requested to partake of our festivity, and join the company, if no body had an objection—"Ah now, "don't be too sure of that," a voice was instantly heard to reply, "I believe you will find "plenty of objection in this company to your "being one amongst us." What had he done, the gentleman demanded—"What have you "done," rejoined the first speaker, "Don't I "know you for the miscreant, that ravished "the poor wench against her will, in presence "of her mother? And didn't your Pagans, "that held her down, ravish the mother after-"wards, in presence of her daughter? And "do you think we will admit you into our "company? Make yourself sure that we shall "not; therefore *get out of this* as speedily as "you can, and away wid you!" Upon this the whole company rose, and in their rising the

civil gentleman made his exit and was off. I relate this incident exactly as it happened, suppressing the name of the gentleman, who was a man of property and some consequence.—When my surprise had subsided, and the punch began to circulate with a rapidity the greater for this gentleman's having troubled the waters, I took my departure, having first cautioned a friend, who sate by me, (and the only protestant in the company) to keep his head cool and beware of the *glorious memory;* this gallant young officer, son to a man, who held lands of my father, promised faithfully to be sober and discreet, as well knowing the company he was in; but my friend having forgot the first part of his promise, and getting very tipsy, let the second part slip out of his memory, and became very mad; for stepping aside for his pistols, he re-entered the room, and laying them on the table, took the cockade from his hat, and dashed it into the punch-bowl, demanding of the company to drink *the glorious and immortal memory of King William* in a bumper, or abide the consequences. I was not there, and if I had been present I could neither have stayed the tumult, nor de-

scribed it. I only know he turned out the next morning merely for honour's sake, but as it was one against a host, the magnanimity of his opponents let him off with a shot or two, that did no execution. I returned to the peaceful family at Clonfert, and fought no more cocks.

The fairies were extremely prevalent at Clonfert: visions of burials attended by long processions of mourners were seen to circle the church yard by night, and there was no lack of oaths and attestations to enforce the truth of it. My mother suffered a loss by them of a large brood of fine turkies, who were every one burnt to ashes, bones and feathers, and their dust scattered in the air by their provident nurse and feeder to appease those mischievous little beings, and prevent worse consequences: the good dame credited herself very highly for this act of atonement, but my mother did not see it quite in so meritorious a light.

A few days after as my father and I were riding in the grounds we crossed upon the Catholic priest of the parish. My father began a conversation with him, and expressed a wish that he would caution his flock against this

idle superstition of the fairies: the good man assured the bishop that in the first place he could not do it if he would; and in the next place confessed that he was himself far from being an unbeliever in their existence. My father thereupon turned the subject, and observed to him with concern, that his steed was a very sorry one, and in very wretched condition—"Truly, my good lord," he replied, "the beast himself is but an ugly garron, and "whereby I have no provender to spare him, "mightily out of heart, as I may truly say; "but your lordship must think a poor priest "like me has a mighty deal of work and very "little pay—" "Why then, brother," said my good father, whilst benevolence beamed in his countenance, "'tis fit that I, who have the "advantage of you in both respects, should "mount you on a better horse, and furnish "you with provender to maintain him—." This parley with the priest passed in the very hay-field, where the bishop's people were at work; orders were instantly given for a stack of hay to be made at the priest's cabin, and in a few days after a steady horse was purchased and presented to him. Surely they could not

be true born Irish fairies, that would spite my father, or even his turkies, after this.

Amongst the labourers in my father's garden there were three brothers of the name of O'Rourke, regularly descended from the kings of Connaught, if they were exactly to be credited for the correctness of their genealogy.—There was also an elder brother of these, Thomas O'Rourke, who filled the superior station of hind, or headman; it was his wife that burnt the bewitched turkies, whilst Tom burnt his wig for joy of my victory at the cock-match, and threw a proper parcel of oatmeal into the air as a votive offering for my glorious success. One of the younger brothers was upon crutches in consequence of a contusion on his hip, which he literally acquired as follows—When my father came down to Clonfert from Dublin, it was announced to him that the bishop was arrived: the poor fellow was then in the act of lopping a tree in the garden; transported at the tidings, he exclaimed—"Is my lord come? Then I'll throw "myself out of this same tree for joy—." He exactly fulfilled his word, and laid himself up for some months.

When I accompanied my mother from Clonfert to Dublin, my father having gone before, we passed the night at Killbeggan, where Sir Thomas Cuffe, (knighted in a frolic by Lord Townshend) kept the inn. A certain Mr. Geoghegan was extremely drunk, noisy and brutally troublesome to Lady Cuffe the hostess: Thomas O'Rourke was with us, and being much scandalized with the behaviour of Geoghegan, took me aside, and in a whisper said—"Squire, will I quiet this same Mr. Geoghe-"gan?" When I replied by all means, but how was it to be done?—Tom produced a knife of formidable length, and demanded—"Haven't I got this? And won't this do the "job, and hasn't he wounded the woman of "the inn with a chopping knife, and what is "this but a knife, and wou'dn't it be a good "deed to put him to death like a mad dog? "Therefore, Squire, do you see, if it will plea-"sure you and my lady there above stairs, who "is ill enough, God he knows, I'll put this "knife into that same Mr. Geoghegan's ribs, "and be off the next moment on the grey "mare; and isn't she in the stable? There-"fore only say the word, and I'll do it." This

was the true and exact proposal of Thomas O'Rourke, and as nearly as I can remember, I have stated it in his very words.

We arrived safe in Dublin, leaving Mr. Geoghegan to get sober at his leisure, and dismissing O'Rourke to his quarters at Clonfert. When we had passed a few days in Kildare-Street, I well remember the surprise it occasioned us one afternoon, when without any notice we saw a great gigantic dirty fellow walk into the room, and march straight up to my father for what purpose we could not devise. My mother uttered a scream, whilst my father with perfect composure addressed him by the name of Stephen, demanding what he wanted with him, and what brought him to Dublin—"Nay, my good lord," replied the man, "I have no other business in Dublin "itself but to take a bit of a walk up from "Clonfert to see your sweet face, long life to "it, and to beg a blessing upon me from your "lordship; that is all." So saying he flounced down on his knees, and in a most piteous kind of howl, closing his hands at the same time cried out—"Pray, my lord, pray to God to bless Stephen Costello—." The scene was

sufficiently ludicrous to have spoiled the solemnity, yet my father kept his countenance, and gravely gave his blessing, saying as he laid his hands on his head—"God bless you, Ste-"phen Costello, and make you a good boy!" The giant sung out a loud amen, and arose, declaring he should immediately set out and return to his home. He would accept no refreshment, but with many thanks and a thousand blessings in recompence for the one he had received, walked out of the house, and I can well believe resumed his pilgrimage to the westward without stop or stay. I should not have considered this and the preceding anecdotes as worth recording, but that they are in some degree characteristic of a very curious and peculiar people, who are not often understood by those who profess to mimic them, and who are too apt to set them forth as objects for ridicule only, when oftentimes even their oddities, if candidly examined, would entitle them to our respect.

I will here mention a very extraordinary honour, which the city of Dublin was pleased to confer upon my father in presenting him with his freedom in a *gold box*; a form of such

high respect as they had never before observed towards any person below the rank of their chief governor; I state this last-mentioned circumstance from authorities that ought not to be mistaken; if the fact is otherwise, I have been misinformed, and the honour conferred upon the Bishop of Clonfert was not without a precedent. The motives assigned in the deed, which accompanied the box, are in general for the great respectability of his character, and in particular for his disinterested protection of the Irish clergy. Under this head it was supposed they alluded to the benefice, which he had bestowed upon a most deserving clergyman, his own particular friend and chaplain, the Reverend Dixie Blondel, who happened also to be at that time chaplain to the Lord Mayor of Dublin. I have the box at this time in my possession.

To the same merits, which influenced the city to bestow this distinguished honour upon my father, I must ascribe that which I received from the University of Dublin by the honorary grant of the degree of Doctor of Laws. Upon this I have only to observe that to be within the sphere of my father's good name,

was to me at once a security against danger and a recommendation to favour and reward.

When I returned to England I entered into an engagement with Mr. Garrick to bring out The West Indian at his theatre. I had received fair and honourable treatment from Mr. Harris, and had not the slightest cause of complaint against him, his brother patentees or his actors. I had however no engagement with him, nor had he signified to me his wish or expectation of any such in future. If notwithstanding, the obligation was honourably such, as I was not free to depart from, in which light I am pretty sure he regarded it, my conduct was no otherwise defensible than as it was not intentionally unfair. My acquaintance with Mr. Garrick had become intimacy between the acting of The Brothers and the acceptance of the West Indian. I resorted to him again and again with the manuscript of my comedy; I availed myself of his advice, of his remarks, and I was neither conscious of doing what was wrong in me to do, nor did any remonstrance ever reach me to apprise me of my error.

I was not indeed quite a novice to the thea-

tre, but I was clearly innocent of knowing or believing myself bound by any rules or usage, that prevented me from offering my production to the one or the other at my own free option. I went to Mr. Garrick; I found in him what my inexperience stood in need of, an admirable judge of stage-effect; at his suggestion I added the preparatory scene in the house of Stockwell, before the arrival of Belcour, where his baggage is brought in, and the domestics of the Merchant are setting things in readiness for his coming. This insertion I made by his advice, and I punctually remember the very instant when he said to me in his chariot on our way to Hampton—"I want something "more to be announced of your West Indian "before you bring him on the stage to give "eclat to his entrance, and rouse the curiosity "of the audience; that they may say—Aye, "here he comes with all his colours flying—"

When I asked how this was to be done, and who was to do it, he considered awhile and then replied—"Why that is your look out, my "friend, not mine; but if neither your Mer-"chant nor his clerk can do it, why, why send "in the servants, and let them talk about him.

" Never let me see a hero step upon the stage " without his trumpeters of some sort or other." Upon this conversation it was that I engrafted the scene above-mentioned, and this was in truth the only alteration of any consequence that the manuscript underwent in its passage to the stage.

After we came to Hampton, where that inimitable man was to be seen in his highest state of animation, we began to debate upon the cast of the play. Barry was extremely desirous to play the part of the Irish Major, and Garrick was very doubtful how to decide, for Moody was then an actor little known and at a low salary. I took no part in the question, for I was entitled to no opinion, but I remember Garrick after long deliberation gave his decree for Moody with considerable repugnance, qualifying his preference of the latter with reasons, that in no respect reflected on the merits of Mr. Barry—but he did not quite see him in the whole part of O'Flaherty; there were certain points of humour, where he thought it likely he might fail, and in that case his failure, like his name, would be more conspicuous than Moody's. In short Moody would take pains;

it might make him, it might mar the other; so Moody had it, and succeeded to our utmost wishes. Mr. King, ever justly a favourite of the public, took the part of Belcour, and Mrs. Abingdon, with some few salvos on the score of condescension, played Charlotte Rusport, and though she would not allow it to be any thing but a sketch, yet she made a character of it by her inimitable acting.

The production of a new play was in those days an event of much greater attraction than from its frequency it is now become, so that the house was taken to the back rows of the front boxes for several nights in succession before that of its representation; yet in this interval I offered to give its produce to Garrick for a picture, that hung over his chimney piece in Southampton-Street, and was only a copy from a Holy Family of Andrea del Sarto: he would have closed with me upon the bargain, but that the picture had been a present to him from Lord Baltimore. My expectations did not run very high when I made this offer.

A rumour had gone about, that the character, which gave its title to the comedy, was satirical; of course the gentlemen, who came

under that description, went down to the theatre in great strength, very naturally disposed to chastise the author for his malignity, and their phalanx was not a little formidable.—Mrs. Cumberland and I sate with Mr. and Mrs. Garrick in their private box. When the prologue-speaker had gone the length of the four first lines the tumult was excessive, and the interruption held so long, that it seemed doubtful, if the prologue would be suffered to proceed. Garrick was much agitated; he observed to me that the appearance of the house, particularly in the pit, was more hostile than he had ever seen it. It so happened that I did not at that moment feel the danger, which he seemed to apprehend, and remarked to him that the very first word, which discovered Belcour's character to be friendly, would turn the clamour for us, and so far I regarded the impetuosity of the audience as a symptom in our favour. Whilst this was passing between us, order was loudly issued for the prologue to begin again, and in the delivery of a few lines more than they had already heard they seemed reconciled to wait

the developement of a character, from which they were told to expect—

"Some emanations of a noble mind."

Their acquiescence however was not set off with much applause; it was a suspicious truce, a sullen kind of civility, that did not promise more favour than we could earn; but when the prologue came to touch upon the Major, and told his countrymen in the galleries, that

—— "His heart can never trip——"

they, honest souls, who had hitherto been treated with little else but stage kicks and cuffs for their entertainment, sent up such a hearty crack, as plainly told us we had not indeed *little cherubs*, but lusty champions, *who sate up aloft*.

Of the subsequent success of this lucky comedy there is no occasion for me to speak; eight and twenty successive nights it went without the buttress of an afterpiece, which was not then the practice of attaching to a new play. Such was the good fortune of an author, who happened to strike upon a popular

and taking plan, for certainly the moral of The West Indian is not quite unexceptionable, neither is the dialogue above the level of others of the same author, which have been much less favoured. The snarlers snapped at it, but they never set their teeth into the right place; I don't think I am very vain when I say that I could have taught them better. Garrick was extremely kind, and threw his shield before me more than once, as the St. James's evening paper could have witnessed. My property in the piece was reserved for me with the greatest exactness; the charge of the house upon the author's nights was then only sixty pounds, and when Mr. Evans the Treasurer came to my house in Queen-Ann-Street in a hackney coach with a huge bag of money, he spread it all in gold upon my table, and seemed to contemplate it with a kind of ecstasy, that was extremely droll; and when I tendered him his customary fee, he peremptorily refused it, saying he had never paid an author so much before, I had fairly earnt it, and he would not lessen it a single shilling, not even his coach-hire, and in that humour he departed. He had no sooner left the room than one entered

it, who was not quite so scrupulous, but quite as welcome; my beloved wife took twenty guineas from the heap, and instantly bestowed them on the faithful servant, who had attended on our children; a tribute justly due to her unwearied diligence and exemplary conduct.

I sold the copy right to Griffin in Catherine-Street, for 150*l.* and if he told the truth when he boasted of having vended 12,000 copies, he did not make a bad bargain; and if he made a good one, which it is pretty clear he did, it is not quite so clear that he deserved it: he was a sorry fellow.

I paid respectful attention to all the floating criticisms, that came within my reach, but I found no opportunities of profiting by their remarks, and very little cause to complain of their personalities; in short I had more praise than I merited, and less cavilling than I expected. One morning when I called upon Mr. Garrick I found him with the St. James's evening paper in his hand, which he began to read with a voice and action of surprise, most admirably counterfeited, as if he had discovered a mine under my feet, and a train to blow me up to destruction——"Here, here," he cried.

"if your skin is less thick than a rhinoceros's "hide, egad, here is that will cut you to the "bone. This is a terrible fellow; I wonder who "it can be."—He began to sing out his libel in a high declamatory tone, with a most comic countenance, and pausing at the end of the first sentence, which seemed to favour his contrivance for a little ingenious tormenting, when he found he had hooked me, he laid down the paper, and began to comment upon the cruelty of newspapers, and moan over me with a great deal of malicious fun and good humour—"Confound these fellows, they spare "nobody. I dare say this is Bickerstaff again; "but you don't mind him; no, no, I see you "don't mind him; a little galled, but not "much hurt: you may stop his mouth with a "golden gag but we'll see how he goes on."—He then resumed his reading, cheering me all the way as it began to soften, till winding up in the most profest panegyric, of which he was himself the writer, I found my friend had had his joke, and I had enjoyed his praise, seasoned and set off, in his inimitable manner, which to be comprehended must have been seen.

It was the remark of Lord Lyttelton upon this comedy, when speaking of it to me one evening at Mrs. Montagu's, that had it not been for the incident of O'Flaherty's hiding himself behind the screen, when he overhears the lawyer's soliloquy, he should have pronounced it a faultless composition. This flattery his lordship surely added against the conviction of his better judgment merely as a sweetener to qualify his criticism, and by so doing convinced me that he suspected me of being less amenable to fair correction than I really am and ever have been. But be this as it may, a criticism from Lord Lyttelton must always be worth recording, and this especially, as it not only applies to my comedy in particular, but is general to all.

"I consider *listening*," said he, "as a re-
"source never to be allowed in any pure drama,
"nor ought any good author to make use of
"it." This position being laid down by authority so high, and audibly delivered, drew the attention of the company assembled for conversation, and all were silent. "It is in
"fact," he added, "a violation of those rules,
"which original authorities have established

" for the constitution of the comic drama." After all due acknowledgments for the favour of his remark, I replied that if I had trespassed against any rule laid down by classical authority in the case alluded to, I had done it inadvertently, for I really did not know where any such rule was to be found.

" What did Aristotle say?—Were there no " rules laid down by him for comedy?" None that I knew; Aristotle referred to the Margites and Ilias Minor as models, but that was no rule, and the models being lost, we had neither precept nor example to instruct us. " Were " there any precedents in the Greek or Roman " drama, which could justify the measure?"— To this I replied that no precedent could justify the measure in my opinion, which his lordship's better judgment had condemned; being possessed of that I should offend no more, but as my error was committed when I had no such advice to guide me, I did recollect that Aristophanes did not scruple to resort to listening, and drawing conclusions from what was overheard, when a man rambled and talked broken sentences in his bed asleep and dreaming; and as for the Roman stage, if any

thing could apologize for the Major's screen, I conceived there were screens in plenty upon that, which formed separate streets and entrances, which concealed the actors from each other, and gave occasion to a great deal of listening and overhearing in their comedy.

"But this occurs," said Lord Lyttelton, "from the construction of the scene, not from "the contrivance and intent of the character, "as in your case; and when such an expedient "is resorted to by an officer, like your Major, "it is discreditable and unbecoming of him as "a man of honour." This was decisive, and I made no longer any struggle. What my predecessors in the drama, who had been dealers in screens, closets and key-holes for a century past, would have said to this doctrine of the noble critic, I don't pretend to guess; it would have made sad havoc with many of them and cut deep into their property; as for me, I had so weak a cause and so strong a majority against me, (for every lady in the room denounced listeners) that all I could do was to insert without loss of time a few words of palliation into the Major's part, by making him say upon resorting to his hiding place—*I'll*

step behind this screen and listen: a good soldier must sometimes fight in ambush as well as in the open field.

I now leave this criticism to the consideration of those ingenious men, who may in future cultivate the stage; I could name one now living, who has made such happy use of his screen in a comedy of the very first merit, that if Aristotle himself had written a whole chapter professedly against *screens*, and Jerry Collier had edited it with notes and illustrations, I would not have placed Lady Teazle out of ear-shot to have saved their ears from the pillory: but if either of these worthies could have pointed out an expedient to have got Joseph Surface off the stage, pending that scene, with any reasonable conformity to nature, they would have done more good to the drama than either of them have done harm; and that is saying a great deal.

There never have been any statute-laws for comedy; there never can be any; it is only referable to the unwritten law of the heart, and that is nature; now though the natural child is illegitimate, the natural comedy is according to my conception of it what in other words

we denominate the legitimate comedy. If it represents men and women as they are, it pictures nature; if it makes monsters, it goes out of nature. It has a right to command the aid of spectacle, as far as spectacle is properly incidental to it, but if it makes its serving-maid its mistress, it becomes a puppet-show, and its actors ought to speak through a comb behind the scenes, and never shew their foolish faces on the stage. If the author conceives himself at liberty to send his characters on and off the stage exactly as he pleases, and thrust them into gentlemen's houses and private chambers, as if they could walk into them as easily as they can walk through the side scenes, he does not know his business: If he gives you the interior of a man of fashion's family, and does not speak the language, or reflect the manners, of a well-bred person, he undertakes to describe company he has never been admitted to, and is an impostor; if he cannot exhibit a distressed gentleman on the scene without a bailiff at his heels to arrest him, nor reform a dissipated lady without a spunging-house to read his lectures in, I am sorry for his dearth of fancy, and lament his want of taste: If he

cannot get his Pegasus past Newgate without his restively stopping like a post horse at the end of his stage, it is a pity he has taught him such unhandsome customs: if he permits the actor, whom he deputes to personate the rake of the day to copy the dress, air, attitude, straddle and outrageous indecorum of those caricatures in our print-shops, which keep no terms with nature, he courts the galleries at the expence of decency, and degrades himself, his actor and the stage to catch those plaudits, that convey no fame, and do not elevate him one inch above the keeper of the beasts in the Tower, who puts his pole between the bars to make the lion roar. In short it is much better, more justifiable and infinitely more charitable, to write nonsense and set it to good music, than to write ribaldry, and impose it upon good actors. But of this more fully and explicitly hereafter, when committing myself and my works to the judgment of posterity, I shall take leave of my contemporaries, and with every parting wish for their prosperity shall bequeath to them honestly and without reserve all that my observation and long expe-

rience can suggest for their edification and advantage.

However before I quite bid farewel to The West-Indian, I must mention a criticism, which I picked up in Rotten-Row from Nugent Lord Clare, not *ex cathedrâ*, but from the saddle on an easy trot. His lordship was contented with the play in general, but he could not relish the five wives of O'Flaherty; they were four too many for an honest man, and the over-abundance of them hurt his lordship's feelings; I thought I could not have a better criterion for the feelings of other people, and desired Moody to manage the matter as well as he could; he put in the qualifier of *en militaire*, and his five wives brought him into no further trouble; all but one were left-handed, and he had German practice for his plea. Upon the whole I must take the world's word for the merit of The West-Indian, and thankfully suppose that what they best liked was in fact best to be liked.

A little straw will serve to light a great fire, and after the acting of The West-Indian, I would say, if the comparison was not too pre-

sumptuous, I was almost the *Master Betty* of the time; but as I dare say that young gentleman is even now too old and too wise to be spoilt by popularity, so was I then not quite boy enough to be tickled by it, and not quite fool enough to confide in it. In short I took the same course then which he is taking now; as he keeps on acting part after part, so did I persist in writing play after play; and this, if I am not mistaken, is the surest course we either of us could take of running through our period of popularity, and of finding our true level at the conclusion of it.

I recollect the fate of a young artist in Northamptonshire, who was famous for his adroitness in pointing and repairing the spires of church-steeples; he formed his scaffolds with consummate ingenuity, and mounted his ladders with incredible success. The spire of the church of Raunds was of prodigious height; it overpeered all its neighbours, as Shakespear does all his rivals; the young adventurer was employed to fix the weather-cock; he mounted to the topmost stone, in which the spindle was bedded; universal plaudits hailed him in his ascent; he found himself at the very acme of

his fame, but glorious ambition tempted him to quit his ladder, and occupy the place of the weather-cock, standing upon one leg, while he sung a song to amaze the rustic multitude below: what the song was, and how many stanzas he lived to get through I do not know; he sung it in too large a theatre, and was somewhat out of hearing; but it is in my memory to know that he came to his cadence before his song did, and falling from his height left the world to draw its moral from his melancholy fate.

I now for the first time entered the lists of controversy, and took up the gauntlet of a renowned champion to vindicate the insulted character of my grandfather Doctor Bentley. The offensive passage met me in a pamphlet written by Bishop Lowth professedly against Warburton, acrimonious enough of all conscience, and unepiscopally intemperate in the highest degree, even if his lordship had not gone out of his course to hurl this dirt upon the coffin of my ancestor. The bishop is now dead, and I will not use his name irreverently; my grandfather was dead, yet he stept aside to hook him in as *a mere verbal critic*, who in

matters of taste and elegant literature he asserts was contemptibly deficient, and then he resorts to his Catullus for the most disgraceful names he can give him as a scholar or a gentleman, and says he was *aut caprimulgus aut fossor*, terms, that in English, would have been downright blackguardism.

All the world knows that Warburton and Lowth had mouthed and mumbled each other till their very hands blushed and their lawn-sleeves were bloody. I should have thought that the prelate, who had Warburton for his antagonist, would hardly have found leisure from his own self-defence to have turned aside and fixed his teeth in a bye-stander. Yet so it was, and it struck me that the unmanly unprovoked attack not only warranted, but demanded, a remonstrance from the descendants of Doctor Bentley. I stood only in the second degree from my uncle Richard, and as much below him in controversial ability, as I was in lineal descent. I appealed therefore in the first place to him, as nearest in blood, and strongest in capacity. His blood however was not in the temper to ferment as mine did, and with a philosophical contempt for this sparring of pens

he positively declined having any thing to do with the affair. I well remember, but I won't describe the scene; he was very pleasant with me, and reminded me with great kindness how utterly unequal I ought to think myself for undertaking to hold an argument against Bishop Lowth. He was perfectly right; it was exactly so that a sensible Roman would have talked to Curtius before he took his foolish leap, or a charitable European to a Bramin widow before she devoted herself to the flames; but my obstinacy was incorrigible. At length having warned me that I was about to draw a complete discomfiture on my cause, he prudently conditioned with me so to mark myself out, either by name or description, in the title of my pamphlet, as that he should stand excused, and out of chance of being mistaken for its author. Nothing could be more reasonable, and I promised to comply with his injunctions, and be duly careful of his safety. This I fulfilled by describing myself under such a signature, as all but told my name, and could not possibly, as I conceived, be fathered upon him. With this he was content, and with great politeness, in which no man ex-

ceeded him, gave me his hand at parting and wished me a good deliverance.

I lost no time in addressing myself to this task, it soon grew into the size of a pamphlet; my heart was warm in the subject, and as soon as my appeal appeared I was publicly known to be the author of it. I may venture to say, that weak as my bow was presumed to be, the arrow did not miss its aim, and justice universally decided for me. Warburton had candidly apologised to Lowth for having unknowingly hurt his feelings by some glances he had made at the person of a deceased relation of the Bishop of Oxford, and I now claimed from Lowth the same candour, which he had experienced in the apology of Warburton. This was unanswerable, and though Bishop Lowth would not condescend to offer the atonement to me, which he had exacted and received from another, still he had the grace to keep silence, and not attempt a justification of himself, and that, which he did not do *per se*, he would not permit to be done *per alium;* for I have reason to know he refused the voluntary reply, tendered to him by a certain clergyman of his diocese, acknowledging that

I had just reason for retaliation, and he thought it better that the affair should pass over in silence on his part.

In the mean time my pamphlet went through two full editions, and I had every reason to believe the judgment of the public was in my favour. I entitled it "A Letter to the Right "Reverend the Lord Bishop of O——d, con- "taining some animadversions upon a charac- "ter given of the late Doctor Bentley in a let- "ter from a late Professor in the University of "Oxford, to the Right Reverend Author of "the Divine Legation of Moses demonstra- "ted."—To this I subjoined, by way of motto,

Jam parce Sepulto.

The following paragraph occurs in the 9th page of this pamphlet, and is fairly pressed upon the party complained of——"Recollect, "my Lord, the warmth, the piety, with which "you remonstrated against Bishop W——'s "treatment of your father in a passage of his "Julian:—*It is not*, (you therein say) *in be- "half of myself that I expostulate, but of "one, for whom I am much more concerned, "that is—my father.* These are your lord-

" ship's words—amiable, affecting expression!
" instructive lesson of filial devotion! alas,
" my lord, that you, who were thus sensible
" to the least speck, which fell upon the repu-
" tation of your father, should be so inveterate
" against the fame of one, at least as eminent
" and perhaps not less dear to his family."

I had traced his *caprimulgas aut fossor* up to its source in one of the most uncleanly samples in Catullus, and in that same satire I was led to the character of Suffenus, who seemed made for the very purposes of retort. My uncle Bentley stood clear from all suspicion of being guilty of the pamphlet, with the exception of one old gentleman only, Mr. Commissary Greaves of Fulbourne in Cambridgeshire, a man of fortune and consequence in his county, who had ever professed a great esteem for the memory of my grandfather, with whom he had lived in great intimacy, and to whom I believe he acknowledged some important obligations. This worthy old gentleman had made a small mistake as to the merit of the pamphlet, and a great one as to the author; for he complimented the writing, and sent a handsome present to the supposed writer.—

When this mistake was no longer a secret from Mr. Greaves, and I received not a syllable on the subject from him, I sent him the following letter, of which I chanced upon the copy, for the better understanding of which I must premise that he had sent me notice, through my relation Doctor Bentley of Nailstone, of a present of books, which he had designed for me, when I was a student at college, amounting in value to twenty pounds, but which promise he excused himself from performing, because there had been a wet season, and some of his fen lands had been under water—

My letter was as follows—

" Dear Sir,

" When in the warmth of your af-
" fection for the memory of my grandfather
" you could praise a pamphlet written by me,
" and address your praises to my uncle, as
" supposing him to be the author of it, I am
" more flattered by your mistake, than I will
" attempt to express to you. You have ever
" been so good to me, that had your commen-
" dations been directed rightly, I must have
" ascribed the greater share of them to your
" charitable interpretation of my zeal, and the

" rest I should have placed to the account of " your politeness.

" When I was an Under-graduate at Tri- " nity-college, you was so obliging as to let " me be informed of your intention to encou- " rage and assist me in my studies, and though " circumstances at that time intervened to " postpone your kind design, you have so " abundantly overpaid me, that I have no " greater ambition now at heart than that I " may continue so to write as to be mistaken " for my uncle, and you so to approve of what " you read, as to see fresh cause of applauding " him, who is so truly deserving of every fa- " vour you can bestow."

" I have the honour to be," &c.

" To William Greaves Esquire,

" Fulbourne."

Before I quite dismiss this subject I beg leave to address a very few words to my friend Mr. Hayley, who in his *desultory remarks*, prefixed to his third volume of Cowper's Letters, has in his mild and civil manner made merciless and uncivil sport with Doctor Bentley's character. I give him notice that I meditate to wreak an exemplary vengeance upon

him, for I will publish in these memoirs a copy of his verses, (very elegant in themselves, and extremely flattering to me) which I have carefully preserved, and from which I shall derive two very considerable advantages—the one will be the credit of having such a sample of good poetry in my book; the other the malicious gratification of convincing my readers, that Mr. Hayley, with all his genius, does not know where to apply it, praising the grandson, who is not worthy of his praise, and censuring the grandfather, whom, as a scholar of the highest class, he of all men living ought not to have treated with flippancy and derision.

And now methinks since I have vowed this vengeance, I will not let it rankle in my heart, neither will I longer withhold from my readers the verses I have promised them, which, though entitled an impromptu by their elegant author, I have not suffered to vanish out of my possession with the rapidity, that they have probably slipt out of his recollection. If he shall be angry with me for publishing them, I desire he will believe, there is not a man living, who would not do as I have done, when flattered by the muse of Hayley: if the following

hasty and unstudied stanzas are not so good as others of his finished compositions, they are still better than any one else would write, or could write, upon so barren a subject—

"*Impromptu on a Letter of Mr. Cumberland's, most libe-*
"*rally commending a Poem of the Author's*—"

"Kind nature with delight regards,
"And glories to impart,
"To her bold race of genuine bards
"Simplicity of heart."

"But gloomy spleen, who still arraigns
"Whate'er we lovely call,
"Hath said that all poetic veins
"Are ting'd with envious gall.

"Each bard, she said, would strike to earth
"His rival's wreath of fame,
"Nor ever to inferior worth
"Allow its humbler claim.

"But nature with a noble pride
"Maintain'd her injur'd cause—
"O Spleen, peruse these lines," she cried,
"Of Cumberland's applause!

"Enough by me hast thou been told
"Of his poetic art;
"Now in his generous praise behold
"The genius of his heart!"

The sullen sprite with shame confess'd
Her sordid maxim vain,
And own'd the true poetic breast
Unconscious of the stain.

Whilst I have been relating the circumstances, that induced me to appeal to the world against so great a man as Bishop Lowth, and considering within myself how far I was justified in that apparently presumptuous measure, some thoughts have struck me, as I went on with my detail, which all arose out of the subject I was upon, though they do not personally apply to the parties I have been speaking of: And after all where is the difference between man and man, so ascendant on one side, and so depressive on the other, as should give to this an authority to insult, and take from that the privilege of remonstrance? It is a truth not sufficiently enforced, and, when enforced, not always admitted, though one of the most useful and important for the government of our conduct, and this it is—that every man, however great in station or in fortune, is mutually dependent upon those, who are dependent upon him. In a social state no man can be truly said to be safe who is not under the pro-

tection of his fellow-creatures; no man can be called happy, who is not possessed of their good will and good opinion; for God never yet endowed a human creature with sensibility to feel an insult, but that he gave him also powers to express his feelings, and propensity to revenge it.

The meanest and most feeble insect, that is provided with a sting, may pierce the eye of the elephant, on whose very ordure it subsists and feeds.

Every human being has a sting; why then does an overgrown piece of mortal clay arrogantly attempt to *bestride the narrow world*, and launch his artificial thunder from a bridge of brass upon us poor underlings in creation? And when we venture to lift up our heads in the crowd, and cry out to the folks about us—"This is mere mock thunder; this is no true "Jupiter; we'll not truckle to his tyranny,"—why will some good-natured friend be ever ready to pluck us by the sleeve, and whisper in our ear—"What are you about? Recol- "lect yourself! he is a giant, a man-moun- "tain; you are a grub, a worm, a beetle; he'll "crush you under his foot; he'll tread you into

"atoms—" not considering, or rather not caring—

> "That the poor beetle, which he trode upon,
> "In mental suffrance felt a pang as great,
> "As what a monarch feels——"

Let no man, who belongs to a community, presume to say that he is independent. There is no such condition in society. Thank God, our virtues are our best defence. Conciliation, mildness, charity, benevolence—*Hæ tibi erunt artes.*

Are there not spirits continually starting out from the mass of mankind, like red hot flakes from the hammer of the blacksmith? And are not these to be feared, who are capable of setting a whole city—aye, even a whole kingdom—in flames, let them only fall upon the train, that is prepared for them? Who then will underwrite a strutting fellow in a lofty station, puffed up with *brief authority*, who won't answer a gentleman's letter, or allow his visit, when he asks admission? If he had the integrity of Aristides, the wisdom of Solon and the eloquence of Demosthenes, there would be the congregation of an incalculable multitude

to sing *Te Deum* at his downfall. He will find himself in the plight of the poor Arab, who made his cream-tarts without pepper; for want of a little wholesome seasoning he will have marred his whole batch of pastry, and be condemned for a bad baker to the pillory.

A man shall sin against the whole decalogue, and in this world escape with more impunity, than the proud fellow, who offends against no commandment, yet provokes you to detest him. I know not how to liken him to any thing alive, except it be to the melancholy mute recluse of the convent of La Trappe, who has no employment in life but to dig his own grave, no other society but to keep company with his own coffin. If I look for his resemblance amongst the irrationals, I should compare him to a poor disconsolate ass, whom nobody owns, and nobody befriends. The man, who has a cudgel, bestows it on his back, and when he brays out his piteous lamentations, the dissonance of his tones provoke no compassion; they jar the ear, but never move the heart.

A certain duke of Alva about a century ago was the most popular man in Spain: the peo-

ple perfectly adored him. He had a revolution in his power every day that he stept without his doors. The prime minister truckled to him; the king trembled at him. How he acquired this extraordinary degree of influence was a mystery, that seemed to puzzle all conjecture—not by his eloquence, or those powers of declamation, which captivate a mob; the illustrious personage could not string three sentences together into common sense or uncommon nonsense: wit he had none, and virtue he by no means abounded in; few men in Spain were supposed to be more unprincipled; if you conceived it was by his munificence and generosity, he could have told you no man bought his popularity so cheap, for when the secret came out, he confessed, that the whole mystery consisted in his wearing out a few more hats in the year than others sacrificed, who did not take off their's so often.

I knew a gentleman, who was the very immediate contrast to this Spanish duke; he was a man of strict morality, who fulfilled the duties and observed the decorum of his profession in the most exemplary manner; in his meditative walk one summer-morning he was greet-

ed by a country fellow with the customary salutation—"Good morning to you, Sir!—a "fine day—a pleasant walk to you!"—"I "don't know you," he replied, "why do you "interrupt me with your familiarity? I did "not speak to you; put your hat upon your "head, and pass on!—" "So I will," cried the fellow, "and never take it off again to such "a proud puppy, whilst I have a head upon "my shoulders—" There never was a hat stirred to that man from that day, and had he fallen into a ditch, I question if there would have been a hand stirred to have helped him out of it.

I return to my narrative—I had a house in Queen-Ann-Street-West at the corner of Wimpole-Street, I lived there many years; my friend Mr. Fitzherbert lived in the same street, and Mr. Burke nearly opposite to me. I was surprised one morning at an early hour by a visit from an old clergyman, the Reverend Decimus Reynolds. I knew there was such a person in existence, and that he was the son of Bishop Reynolds by my father's aunt, and of course his first cousin, but I had never seen him to my knowledge in my life, and he came

now at a hour when I was so particularly engaged, that I should have denied myself to him but that he had called once or twice before and been disappointed of seeing me. I had my office papers before me, and my wife was making my tea, that I might get down to Whitehall in time for my business, and the coach was waiting at the door. He was shewn into the room; a more uncouth person, habit and address was hardly to be met with: he advanced, stopt, and stood staring with his eyes fixed upon me for some time, when, putting his hand into a pocket in the lining of the breast of his coat, he drew out an old packet of paper rolled up and tied with whip-cord, and very ceremoniously desired me to peruse it. I begged to know what it was; for it was a work of time to unravel the knots—he replied—"My will." And what am I to do with your will, Sir?—"My heir—" Well, Sir, and who is your heir? (I really did not understand him)—"Richard Cumberland—"look at the date—left it to you twenty years "ago—my whole estate—real and personal—"come to town on purpose—brought up my "title deeds—put them into your hands—sign

"a deed of gift, and make them over to you "hard and fast."

All this while I had not looked at his will; I did not know he had any property, or, if he had, I had no guess where it laid, nor did I so much as know whereabouts he lived. In the mean time he delivered himself in so strange a style, by starts and snatches, with long pauses and strong sentences, that I suspected him to be deranged, and I saw by the expression of my wife's countenance, that she was under the same suspicion also. I now cast my eye upon the will; I found my name there as his heir under a date of twenty years past; it was therefore no sudden caprice, and I conjured him to tell me if he had any cause of quarrel or displeasure with his nearer relations. Upon this he sate down, took some time to compose himself, for he had been greatly agitated, and having recovered his spirits, answered me deliberately and calmly, that he had no immediate matter of offence with his relations, but he had no obligations to them of any sort, and had been entirely the founder of his own fortune, which by marriage he had acquired and by œconomy improved. I stated to him that my

friend and cousin Mr. Richard Reynolds of Paxton in Huntingdonshire was his natural heir, and a man of most unexceptionable worth and good character: he did not deny it, but he was wealthy and childless, and he had bequeathed it to me, as his will would testify, twenty years ago, as being the representative of the maternal branch of his family: in fine he required of me to accompany him to my conveyancer, and direct a positive deed of gift to be drawn up, for which purpose he had brought his title deeds with him, and should leave them in my hands. He added in further vindication of his motives, that my father had been ever his most valued friend, that he had constantly watched my conduct and scrutinised my character, although he had not seen occasion to establish any personal acquaintance with me. Upon this explanation, and the evidence of his having inherited no atom of his fortune from his paternal line, I accepted his bounty so far as to appoint the next morning for calling on Mr. Heron, who then had chambers in Gray's Inn, when I would state the case to him, and refer myself to his judgment and good counsel. The result of my confer-

ence with the lately deceased Sir Richard Heron was the insertion of a clause of resumption, empowering the donor to revoke his deed at any future time when he should see fit, and this clause I particularly pointed out to my benefactor when he signed the deed.

It was with difficulty I prevailed upon him to admit it, and can witness to the uneasiness it gave him, whilst he prophetically said I had left him exposed to the solicitations and remonstrances of his nephews, and that the time might come, when in the debility of age and irresolution of mind, he might be pressed into a revocation of what he had decided upon as the most deliberate act of his life.

My kind old friend stood a long siege before he suffered his prediction to take place; for it was not till after nearly ten years of uninterrupted cordiality, that, weak and wearied out by importunity, he capitulated with his besiegers, and sending his nephew into my house in Queen-Ann-Street unexpectedly one morning, surprised me with a demand, that I would render back the whole of his title deeds: I delivered them up exactly as I had received them;

his messenger put them into his hackney coach and departed.

In consequence of this proceeding I addressed the following letter to the Reverend Mr. Decimus Reynolds at Clophill in Bedfordshire.

" Queen-Ann-Street

" Dear Sir, " Monday 13th Jan. 1779.

" I received your letter by the con-
" veyance of Major George Reynolds, and in
" obedience to your commands have resigned
" into his hands all your title deeds, entrusted
" to my custody. I would have had a sche-
" dule taken of them by Mr. Kipling for your
" better satisfaction and security, but as your
" directions were peremptory, and Major Rey-
" nolds, who was ill, might have been preju-
" diced by any delay, I thought it best to put
" them into his hands without further form,
" which be assured I have done without the
" omission of one, for they have lain under seal
" at my banker's ever since they have been
" committed to my care.

" Whatever motives may govern you, dear
" Sir, for recalling either your confidence, or

" your bounty, from me and my family, be
" assured you will still possess and retain my
" gratitude and esteem. I have only a second
" time lost a father, and I am now too much
" in the habit of disappointment and misfor-
" tune, not to acquiesce with patience under
" the dispensation.

" You well can recollect, that your first
" bounty was unexpected and unsolicited: it
" would have been absolute, if I had not
" thought it for my reputation to make it con-
" ditional, and subject to your revocation: per-
" haps I did not believe you would revoke it,
" but since you have been induced to wish it,
" believe me I rejoice in the reflection, that
" every thing has been done by me for your
" accommodation, and I had rather my chil-
" dren should inherit an honourable poverty,
" than an ample patrimony, which caused the
" giver of it one moment of regret.

" I believe I have some few papers still at
" Tetworth, which I received from you in the
" country. I shall shortly go down thither,
" and will wait upon you with them. At the
" same time, if you wish to have the original
" conveyance of your lands, as drawn up by

" Sir Richard Heron, I shall obey you by re-
" turning it: the uses being cancelled, the form
" can be of little value, and I can bear in me-
" mory your former goodness without such a
" remembrancer.

" Mrs. Cumberland and my daughters join
" me in love and respects to you and Mrs.
" Reynolds, whom by this occasion I beg to
" thank for all her kindness to me and mine.
" I spoke yesterday to Sir Richard Heron"
[*Sir Richard Heron was Chief Secretary in Ireland*] " and pressed with more than com-
" mon earnestness upon him to fulfil your
" wishes in favour of Mr. Decimus Reynolds
" in Ireland. It would be much satisfaction to
" me to hear the deeds came safe to hand, and
" I hope you will favour me with a line to say
" so. " I am, &c. &c.

" R. C."

I have been the more particular in the detail of this transaction, because I had been unfairly represented by a relation, whom in the former part of these memoirs I have recorded as the friend of my youth; a man, whom I dearly loved, and towards whom I had conducted myself through the whole progress of

this affair with the strictest honour and good faith, voluntarily subjecting myself, the father of six children, to be deprived of a valuable gift, which the bestower of it wished to have been absolute and irrevocable.

That relation is yet living, and by some few years an older man than I am. Though I may have ceased to live in his remembrance, he has not lost his place in my affection and regard. I wish him health and happiness for the remainder of his days, and, in the perfect consciousness of having merited more kindness than I have received, bid him heartily farewel.

There was more celebrity attached to the success of a new play in the days, of which I am speaking, than in the present time, when—

> *Portents and prodigies are grown so frequent,*
> *That they have lost their name.*

The happy hit of The West-Indian drew a considerable resort of the friends and followers of the Muses to my house. I was superlatively blest in a wife, who conducted my family with due attention to my circumstances, yet with every elegance and comfort, that could render it a welcome and agreeable ren-

dezvous to my guests. I had six children, whose birthdays were comprised within the period of six years, and they were by no means trained and educated with that laxity of discipline, which renders so many houses terrible to the visitor, and almost justifies Foote in his professed veneration for the character of Herod. My young ones stood like little soldiers to be reviewed by those, who wished to have them drawn up for inspection, and were dismissed like soldiers at a word. Few parents had more excuse for being vain than my wife and I had, for I may be allowed to say my daughters even then gave promise of that grace and beauty, for which they afterwards became so generally and conspicuously noticed; and my four boys were not behind them in form or feature, though hot climates and hard duty by sea and land, in the service of their king and country, have laid two of them in distant graves, and rendered the survivors war-worn veterans before their time. Even poor Fitzherbert, my unhappy and lamented friend, with all his fond benignity of soul could not with his caresses introduce a relaxation of discipline in the ranks of our small infantry; and

though Garrick could charm a circle of them about him whilst he acted the turkey-cocks, and peacocks and water-wagtails to their infinite and undescribable amusement, yet at the word or even look of the mother, *hi motus animorum* were instantly composed and order re-established, whenever it became time to release their generous entertainer from the trouble of his exertions.

Ah! I would wish the world to believe, that they take but a very short and impartial estimate of that departed character, who only appreciate him as the best actor in the world: he was more and better than that excellence alone could make him by a thousand estimable qualities, and much as I enjoyed his company, I have been more gratified by the emanations of his heart than by the sallies of his fancy and imagination. Nature had done so much for him, that he could not help being an actor; she gave him a frame of so manageable a proportion, and from its flexibility so perfectly under command, that by its aptitude and elasticity he could draw it out to fit any sizes of character, that tragedy could offer to him, and contract it to any scale of ridiculous diminu-

tion, that his Abel Drugger, Scrub or Fribble could require of him to sink it to. His eye in the mean time was so penetrating, so speaking; his brow so moveable, and all his features so plastic, and so accommodating, that whereever his mind impelled them they would go, and before his tongue could give the text, his countenance would express the spirit and the passion of the part he was encharged with.

I always studied the assortment of the characters, who honoured me with their company, so as never to bring unconjenial humours into contact with each other. How often have I seen all the objects of society frustrated by inattention to the proper grouping of the guests! The sensibility of some men of genius is so quick and captious, that you must first consider whom they can be happy with, before you can promise yourself any happiness with them. A rivalry in wit and humour will oftentimes render both parties silent, and put them on their guard; if a chance hit, or lucky sally, on the part of a competitor, engrosses the applause of the table, ten to one if the stricken cock ever crows upon the pit again; a matter-of-fact man will make a pleasant fellow sullen,

and a sullen fellow, if provoked by raillery, will disturb the comforts of the whole society.

It is tiresome listening to the nonsense of those, who can talk nothing else, but nonsense talked by men of wit and understanding, in the hour of relaxation, is of the very finest essence of conviviality, and a treat delicious to those, who have the sense to comprehend it. I have known, and could name many, who understood this art in its perfection, but as it implies a trust in the company, not always to be risked, their practice of it was not very frequent.

Raillery is of all weapons the most dangerous and two-edged; of course it ought never to be handled, but by a gentleman, and never should be played with, but upon a gentleman; the familiarity of a low-born vulgar man is dreadful; his raillery, his jocularity, like the shaking of a water spaniel, can never fail to soil you with some sprinkling of the dunghill, out of which he sprung.

A disagreement about a name or a date will mar the best story, that was ever put together. Sir Joshua Reynolds luckily could not

hear an interrupter of this sort; Johnson would not hear, or if he heard him, would not heed him; Soame Jenyns heard him, heeded him, set him right, and took up his tale, where he had left it, without any diminution of its humour, adding only a few more twists to his snuff-box, a few more taps upon the lid of it, with a preparatory grunt or two, the invariable forerunners of the amenity, that was at the heels of them. He was the man, who bore his part in all societies with the most even temper and undisturbed hilarity of all the good companions, whom I ever knew. He came into your house at the very moment you had put upon your card; he dressed himself to do your party honour in all the colours of the jay; his lace indeed had long since lost its lustre, but his coat had faithfully retained its cut since the days, when gentlemen embroidered figured velvets with short sleeves, boot cuffs and buckram skirts; as nature had cast him in the exact mould of an ill-made pair of stiff stays, he followed her so close in the fashion of his coat, that it was doubted if he did not wear them: because he had a protuberant wen just under his pole, he wore a wig, that did not cover

above half his head. His eyes were protruded like the eyes of the lobster, who wears them at the end of his feelers, and yet there was room between one of these and his nose for another wen that added nothing to his beauty; yet I heard this good man very innocently remark, when Gibbon published his history, that he wondered any body so ugly could write a book.

Such was the exterior of a man, who was the charm of the circle, and gave a zest to every company he came into; his pleasantry was of a sort peculiar to himself; it harmonized with every thing; it was like the bread to our dinner; you did not perhaps make it the whole, or principal part, of your meal, but it was an admirable and wholesome auxiliary to your other viands. Soame Jenyns told you no long stories, engrossed not much of your attention, and was not angry with those that did; his thoughts were original, and were apt to have a very whimsical affinity to the paradox in them: he wrote verses upon dancing, and prose upon the origin of evil, yet he was a very indifferent metaphysician and a worse dancer; ill nature and personality, with the

single exception of his lines upon Johnson, I never heard fall from his lips; those lines I have forgotten, though I believe I was the first person, to whom he recited them; they were very bad, but he had been told that Johnson ridiculed his metaphysics, and some of us had just then been making extemporary epitaphs upon each other: though his wit was harmless, yet the general cast of it was ironical; there was a terseness in his repartees, that had a play of words as well as of thought, as when speaking of the difference between laying out money upon land, or purchasing into the funds, he said, "One was principal without interest, and "the other interest without principal." Certain it is he had a brevity of expression, that never hung upon the ear, and you felt the point in the very moment that he made the push. It was rather to be lamented that his lady Mrs. Jenyns had so great a respect for his good sayings, and so imperfect a recollection of them, for though she always prefaced her recitals of them with—*as Mr. Jenyns says*—it was not always what Mr. Jenyns said, and never, I am apt to think, *as* Mr. Jenyns said; but she was an excellent old lady, and twirled

her fan with as much mechanical address as her ingenious husband twirled his snuff box.

The brilliant vivacity of Garrick was subject to be clouded; little flying stories had too much of his attention, and more of his credit than they should have had; and certainly there were too many babblers, who had access to his ear. There was some precaution necessary as to the company you associated with him at your table; Fitzherbert understood that in general admirably well, yet he told me of a certain day, when Garrick, who had perhaps been put a little out of his way, and was missing from the company, was found in the back yard acting a turkey-cock to a black boy, who was capering for joy and continually crying out—"Massa Garrick, do so make me laugh: "I shall die with laughing—" The story I have no doubt is true; but I rather think it indicates the very contrary from a ruffled temper, and marks good humour in its strongest light. To give amusement to children, and to take pleasure in the act, is such a symptom of suavity, as can never be mistaken.

I made a visit with him by his own proposal to Foote at Parson's Green; I have heard

it said he was reserved and uneasy in his company; I never saw him more at ease and in a happier flow of spirits than on that occasion.

Where a loud-tongued talker was in company, Edmund Burke declined all claims upon attention, and Samuel Johnson, whose ears were not quick, seldom lent them to his conversation, though he loved the man, and admired his talents; I have seen a dull damping matter-of-fact man quell the effervescence even of Foote's unrivalled humour.

But I remember full well, when Garrick and I made him the visit above-mentioned poor Foote had something worse than a dull man to struggle with, and matter of fact brought home to him in a way, that for a time entirely overthrew his spirits, and most completely *frighted him from his propriety*. We had taken him by surprise, and of course were with him some hours before dinner, to make sure of our own if we had missed of his. He seemed overjoyed to see us, engaged us to stay, walked with us in his garden, and read to us some scenes roughly sketched for his Maid of Bath. His dinner was quite good enough, and his

wine superlative: Sir Robert Fletcher, who had served in the East Indies, dropt in before dinner and made the fourth of our party: When we had passed about two hours in perfect harmony and hilarity, Garrick called for his tea, and Sir Robert rose to depart: there was an unlucky screen in the room, that hid the door, and behind which Sir Robert hid himself for some purpose, whether natural or artificial I know not; but Foote, supposing him gone, instantly began to play off his ridicule at the expence of his departed guest. I must confess it was (in the cant phrase) *a way that he had*, and just now a very unlucky way, for Sir Robert bolting from behind the screen, cried out—"I am not gone, Foote; spare me "till I am out of hearing; and now with your "leave I will stay till these gentlemen depart, "and then you shall amuse me at their cost, "as you have amused them at mine."

A remonstrance of this sort was an electric shock, that could not be parried. No wit could furnish an evasion, no explanation could suffice for an excuse. The offended gentleman was to the full as angry as a brave man ought to be with an unfortunate wit, who pos-

sessed very little of that quality, which he abounded in. This event, which deprived Foote of all presence of mind, gave occasion to Garrick to display his genius and good nature in their brightest lustre: I never saw him in a more amiable light; the infinite address and ingenuity, that he exhibited, in softening the enraged guest, and reconciling him to pass over an affront, as gross as could well be put upon a man, were at once the most comic and the most complete I ever witnessed. Why was not James Boswell present to have recorded the dialogue and the action of the scene? My stupid head only carried away the effect of it. It was as if Diomed, (who being the son of Tydeus was I conclude a great hero in a small compass) had been shielding Thersites from the wrath of Ajax; and so wrathful was our Ajax, that if I did not recollect there was a certain actor at Delhi, who in the height of the massacre charmed away the furious passions of Nadir Shaw, and saved a remnant of the city, I should say this was a victory without a parallel. I hope Foote was very grateful, but when a man has been completely humbled, he is not very fond of recollecting it.

There was a gentleman of very general notoriety at this time, who had the address to collect about him a considerable resort of men of wit and learning at no other expence on his part than of the meat and drink, which they consumed; for as he had no predilection for reading their works, he did not put himself to the charge of buying them. The gentleman himself was of the Scottish nation; in that nobody could be mistaken; all beyond that was matter of conjecture, save only that it was universally understood that Mr. Thomas Mills was under the protection of the great Lord Mansfield. Having been Town-Major of Quebec, he took the title of a field officer, and having been squire to a knight of the Bath on the ceremony of an installation, he became Sir Thomas, and a knight himself. It was chiefly through my acquaintance with this gentleman that I became a member of a very pleasant society, (for we never had the establishment of a club) who used to dine together upon stated days at the British Coffee-House, then kept by Mrs. Anderson, a person of great respectability. Many of the members of this society were men of th first e minence for their talents, and

as there was no exclusion in our system of any member's friend or friends, our parties were continually enlivened by the introduction of new guests, who of course furnished new sources for conversation, from which politics and party seemed by general consent decidedly proscribed. Foote, Reynolds, Fitzherbert, Goldsmith, Garrick, Macpherson, Doctors Carlisle, Robinson, Beattie, Caleb Whitefoord, with many others, resorted there as they saw fit.

In one of these meetings it was suggested and recommended to me to take up the character of a North-Briton, as I had those of an Irishman and West-Indian. I observed, in answer to this, that I had not the same chance for success as I had in my sketch of O'Flaherty, for I had never resided in Scotland, and should be perfectly to seek for the dialect of my hero. "How could that be," Fitzherbert observed, "when I was in the very place to find it, (alluding to the British Coffee-House and the company we were in) "however," he added, "give your Scotchman character, and "take your chance for dialect. If you bring "a Roman on the stage, you don't make him

"speak Latin—" "No, no," cried Foote, "and if you don't make him wear breeches, "Garrick will be much obliged to you. When "I was at Stranraer I went to the Kirk, where "the Mess-John was declaiming most furiously "against luxury, and, as heaven shall judge "me, there was not a pair of shoes in the whole "congregation."

This turned the conversation from my comedy to matters more amusing, but the suggestion had taken hold of my fancy, and I began to frame the character of Colin Macleod upon the model of a Highland servant, who with scrupulous integrity, and a great deal of nationality about him, managed all the domestic affairs of Sir Thomas Mills's household, and being a great favourite of every body, who resorted there, became in time, as it were, one of the company. With no other guide for the dialect of my Macleod than what the Scotch characters of the stage supplied me with, I endowed him with a good heart, and sent him to seek his fortune.

I was aware I had some little fame at stake, and bestowed my utmost care and attention upon the writing of this comedy: I availed

myself of Mr. Garrick's judgment at all proper intervals as I advanced towards the completion of it. This I have acknowledged in the advertisement, and though I did not form sanguine hopes of its obtaining equal success with The West-Indian in representation, I confess I flattered myself that I had outgone that drama in point of composition. When I found that Garrick thought of it as I did, I ventured to avow my preference in the prologue. I have been reading it over with attention, and many years have passed since I wrote it, I have very little of the feeling of the author when I speak of it. I rather think I was right in giving it the preference to the West-Indian, though I am far from sure I was unprejudiced in my judgment at that time. An author, who is conscious that his new work will not be equally popular with his preceding one, will be very apt to imitate the dealer, who, having a pair of horses to sell, will bestow all his praise upon the worst, and leave the best to recommend himself. I verily believe if The Fashionable Lover was not my composition, and I were called upon to give my opinion of it, (speaking only of its merits, and reserving to

myself my opinion of its faults) I should be inclined to say it was a drama of a moral, grave and tender cast, inasmuch as I discovered in it sentiments, laudably directed against national prejudice, breach of trust, seduction, gaming, and the general dissipation of the time then present. I could not deny it a preference to the West-Indian in a moral light, and perhaps, if I were in very good humour with its author, I might be tempted to say that in point of diction it approached very nearly to what I conceived to be the true style of comedy—*Joca non infra soccum, seria non usque cothurnum.*

At the time when this play came out, the demands of the stage for novelty were much limited, and of course the excluded many had full leisure to wreak their malice on the selected few. I was silly enough to be in earnest and make serious appeals against cavillers and slanderers below notice: this induced my friend Garrick to call me the man without a skin, and sure enough I should have been without a skin, if the newspaper beadles could have had their will of me, for I constantly stood out against them, and would never ask quarter. I

have been long since convinced of my folly, but I am not at all ashamed of my principle, for I always made common cause with my contemporaries, and never separated my own particular interests from those of literature in general, as will in part appear by the following paragraph, extracted from the advertisement, which I prefixed to this comedy on its publication—"Whether the reception of this comedy," I therein say, "may be such as shall encourage "me to future efforts is of small consequence "to the public, but if it should chance to ob- "tain some little credit with the candid part "of mankind, and its author for once escape "without those personal and unworthy asper- "sions, which writers, who hide their own "names, fling on them, who publish their's, "my success, it may be hoped, will draw forth "others to the undertaking with far superior "requisites; and that there are numbers under "this description, whose sensibility keeps them "silent, I am well persuaded when I consider "how general it is for men of the finest parts "to be subject to the finest feelings; and I "would submit whether this unhandsome prac- "tice of abuse is not calculated to create in

" the minds of men of genius not only a disin-
" clination to engage in dramatic compositions,
" but a languid and unanimated manner of
" executing them, &c. &c.—"

The remark is just, but I remember Lord Mansfield on a certain occasion said to me, that if a single syllable from his pen could at once confute an anonymous defamer, he would not gratify him with the word. This might be a very becoming rule for him to follow, and yet it might by no means apply to a man of my humble sort, and in truth there was a filthy nest of vipers at that time in league against every name, to which any degree of celebrity was attached, and they kept their hold upon the papers till certain of their leaders were compelled to fly their country, some to save their ears and some to save their necks. They were well known, and I am sorry to say some men, whose minds should have been superior to any terrors they could hold out, made suit to them for favour, nay even combined with them on some occasions, and were mean enough to enroll themselves under their despicable banners. It is to the honour of the present time, and infinitely to the repose of the present writers for

the stage, that all these dirty doings are completely done away, and an æra of candour and human kindness has succeeded to one, that was scandalously its opposite.

At this time I did not know Oliver Goldsmith even by person; I think our first meeting chanced to be at the British-Coffee-House; when we came together, we very speedily coalesced, and I believe he forgave me for all the little fame I had got by the success of my West-Indian, which had put him to some trouble, for it was not his nature to be unkind, and I had soon an opportunity of convincing him how incapable I was of harbouring resentment, and how zealously I took my share in what concerned his interest and reputation. That he was fantastically and whimsically vain all the world knows, but there was no settled and inherent malice in his heart. He was tenacious to a ridiculous extreme of certain pretensions, that did not, and by nature could not, belong to him, and at the same time inexcusably careless of the fame, which he had powers to command. His table-talk was, as Garrick aptly compared it, like that of a parrot, whilst he wrote like Apollo; he had gleams

of eloquence, and at times a majesty of thought, but in general his tongue and his pen had two very different styles of talking. 'What foibles he had he took no pains to conceal, the good qualities of his heart were too frequently obscured by the carelessness of his conduct, and the frivolity of his manners. Sir Joshua Reynolds was very good to him, and would have drilled him into better trim and order for society, if he would have been amenable, for Reynolds was a perfect gentleman, had good sense, great propriety with all the social attributes, and all the graces of hospitality, equal to any man. He well knew how to appretiate men of talents, and how near a kin the Muse of poetry was to that art, of which he was so eminent a master. From Goldsmith he caught the subject of his famous Ugolino; what aids he got from others, if he got any, were worthily bestowed and happily applied.

There is something in Goldsmith's prose, that to my ear is uncommonly sweet and harmonious; it is clear, simple, easy to be understood; we never want to read his period twice over, except for the pleasure it bestows; obscurity never calls us back to a repetition of t.

That he was a poet there is no doubt, but the paucity of his verses does not allow us to rank him in that high station, where his genius might have carried him. There must be bulk, variety and grandeur of design to constitute a first-rate poet. The Deserted Village, Traveller and Hermit are all specimens beautiful as such, but they are only birds eggs on a string, and eggs of small birds too. One great magnificent *whole* must be accomplished before we can pronounce upon the *maker* to be the ὁ ποιήτης. Pope himself never earned this title by a work of any magnitude but his Homer, and that being a translation only constitutes him an accomplished versifier. Distress drove Goldsmith upon undertakings, neither congenial with his studies, nor worthy of his talents. I remember him, when in his chamber in the Temple, he shewed me the beginning of his *Animated Nature;* it was with a sigh, such as genius draws, when hard necessity diverts it from its bent to drudge for bread, and talk of birds and beasts and creeping things, which Pidcock's show-man would have done as well. Poor fellow, he hardly knew an ass from a mule, nor a turkey from a goose, but

when he saw it on the table. But publishers hate poetry, and Paternoster-Row is not Parnassus. Even the mighty Doctor Hill, who was not a very delicate feeder, could not make a dinner out of the press till by a happy transformation into Hannah Glass he turned himself into a cook, and sold receipts for made-dishes to all the savoury readers in the kingdom. Then indeed the press acknowledged him second in fame only to John Bunyan; his feasts kept pace in sale with Nelson's fasts, and when his own name was fairly written out of credit, he wrote himself into immortality under an alias. Now though necessity, or I should rather say the desire of finding money for a masquerade, drove Oliver Goldsmith upon abridging histories and turning Buffon into English, yet I much doubt if without that spur he would ever have put his Pegasus into action; no, if he had been rich, the world would have been poorer than it is by the loss of all the treasures of his genius and the contributions of his pen.

Who will say that Johnson himself would have been such a champion in literature, such a front-rank soldier in the fields of fame, if he

had not been pressed into the service, and driven on to glory with the bayonet of sharp necessity pointed at his back? If fortune had turned him into a field of clover, he would have laid down and rolled in it. The mere manual labour of writing would not have allowed his lassitude and love of ease to have taken the pen out of the inkhorn, unless the cravings of hunger had reminded him that he must fill the sheet before he saw the table cloth. He might indeed have knocked down Osbourne for a blockhead, but he would not have knocked him down with a folio of his own writing. He would perhaps have been the dictator of a club, and wherever he sate down to conversation, there must have been that splash of strong bold thought about him, that we might still have had a collectanea after his death; but of prose I guess not much, of works of labour none, of fancy perhaps something more, especially of poetry, which under favour I conceive was not his tower of strength. I think we should have had his Rasselas at all events, for he was likely enough to have written at Voltaire, and brought the question to the test, if infidelity is any aid to wit. An orator he must

have been; not improbably a parliamentarian, and, if such, certainly an oppositionist, for he preferred to talk against the tide. He would indubitably have been no member of the Whig Club, no partisan of Wilkes, no friend of Hume, no believer in Macpherson; he would have put up prayers for early rising, and laid in bed all day, and with the most active resolutions possible been the most indolent mortal living. He was a good man by nature, a great man by genius, we are now to enquire what he was by compulsion.

Johnson's first style was naturally energetic, his middle style was turgid to a fault, his latter style was softened down and harmonized into periods, more tuneful and more intelligible. His execution was rapid, yet his mind was not easily provoked into exertion; the variety we find in his writings was not the variety of choice arising from the impulse of his proper genius, but tasks imposed upon him by the dealers in ink, and contracts on his part submitted to in satisfaction of the pressing calls of hungry want; for, painful as it is to relate, I have heard that illustrious scholar assert (and he never varied from the truth of fact)

that he subsisted himself for a considerable space of time upon the scanty pittance of four-pence halfpenny per day. How melancholy to reflect that his vast trunk and stimulating appetite were to be supported by what will barely feed the weaned infant! Less, much less, than Master Betty has earned in one night, would have cheered the mighty mind, and maintained the athletic body of Samuel Johnson in comfort and abundance for a twelvemonth. Alas! I am not fit to paint his character; nor is there need of it; *Etiam mortuus loquitur:* every man, who can buy a book, has bought a *Boswell;* Johnson is known to all the reading world. I also knew him well, respected him highly, loved him sincerely: it was never my chance to see him in those moments of moroseness and ill humour, which are imputed to him, perhaps with truth, for who would slander him? But I am not warranted by any experience of those humours to speak of him otherwise than of a friend, who always met me with kindness, and from whom I never separated without regret.—When I sought his company he had no capricious excuses for withholding it, but lent him-

self to every invitation with cordiality, and brought good humour with him, that gave life to the circle he was in. He presented himself always in his fashion of apparel; a brown coat with metal buttons, black waistcoat and worsted stockings, with a flowing bob wig was the style of his wardrobe, but they were in perfectly good trim, and with the ladies, which he generally met, he had nothing of the slovenly philosopher about him; he fed heartily, but not voraciously, and was extremely courteous in his commendations of any dish, that pleased his palate; he suffered his next neighbour to squeeze the China oranges into his wine glass after dinner, which else perchance had gone aside, and trickled into his shoes, for the good man had neither straight sight nor steady nerves.

At the tea table he had considerable demands upon his favourite beverage, and I remember when Sir Joshua Reynolds at my house reminded him that he had drank eleven cups, he replied—"Sir, I did not count your glasses of "wine, why should you number up my cups "of tea?" And then laughing in perfect good humour he added—"Sir, I should have

"released the lady from any further trouble, "if it had not been for your remark; but you "have reminded me that I want one of the "dozen, and I must request Mrs. Cumber- "land to round up my number—" When he saw the readiness and complacency, with which my wife obeyed his call, he turned a kind and cheerful look upon her and said—"Madam, "I must tell you for your comfort you have "escaped much better than a certain lady did "awhile ago, upon whose patience I intruded "greatly more than I have done on yours; "but the lady asked me for no other purpose "but to make a Zany of me, and set me gab- "bling to a parcel of people I knew nothing "of; so, madam, I had my revenge of her; "for I swallowed five and twenty cups of her "tea, and did not treat her with as many "words—" I can only say my wife would have made tea for him as long as the New River could have supplied her with water.

It was on such occasions he was to be seen in his happiest moments, when animated by the cheering attention of friends, whom he liked, he would give full scope to those talents for narration, in which I verily think he was

unrivalled both in the brilliancy of his wit, the flow of his humour and the energy of his language. Anecdotes of times past, scenes of his own life, and characters of humourists, enthusiasts, crack-brained projectors and a variety of strange beings, that he had chanced upon, when detailed by him at length, and garnished with those episodical remarks, sometimes comic, sometimes grave, which he would throw in with infinite fertility of fancy, were a treat, which though not always to be purchased by five and twenty cups of tea, I have often had the happiness to enjoy for less than half the number. He was easily led into topics; it was not easy to turn him from them; but who would wish it? If a man wanted to shew himself off by getting up and riding upon him, he was sure to run restive and kick him off; you might as safely have backed Bucephalus, before Alexander had lunged him. Neither did he always like to be over-fondled; when a certain gentleman out-acted his part in this way, he is said to have demanded of him—"What provokes your risibility, Sir? Have "I said any thing that you understand?—"Then I ask pardon of the rest of the com-

"pany—" But this is Henderson's anecdote of him, and I won't swear he did not make it himself. The following apology however I myself drew from him, when speaking of his tour I observed to him upon some passages as rather too sharp upon a country and people, who had entertained him so handsomely— "Do you think so, Cumbey?" he replied.— "Then I give you leave to say, and you may "quote me for it, that there are more gentle- "men in Scotland than there are shoes.—"

But I don't relish these sayings, and I am to blame for retailing them; we can no more judge of men by these droppings from their lips, than we can guess at the contents of the river Nile by a pitcher of its water. If we were to estimate the wise men of Greece by Laertius's scraps of their sayings, what a parcel of old women should we account them to have been!

The expause of matter, which Johnson had found room for in his intellectual storehouse, the correctness with which he had assorted it, and the readiness with which he could turn to any article that he wanted to make present use of, were the properties in him, which I con-

templated with the most admiration. Some have called him a savage; they were only far right in the resemblance, as that, like the savage, he never came into suspicious company without his spear in his hand and his bow and quiver at his back. In quickness of intellect few ever equalled him, in profundity of erudition many have surpassed him. I do not think he had a pure and classical taste, nor was apt to be best pleased with the best authors, but as a general scholar he ranks very high. When I would have consulted him upon certain points of literature, whilst I was making my collections from the Greek dramatists for my essays in The Observer, he candidly acknowledged that his studies had not lain amongst them, and certain it is there is very little shew of literature in his Ramblers, and in the passage, where he quotes Aristotle, he has not correctly given the meaning of the original. But this was merely the result of haste and inattention, neither is he so to be measured, for he had so many parts and properties of scholarship about him, that you can only fairly review him as a man of general knowledge. As a poet his translations of Juvenal gave him a

name in the world, and gained him the applause of Pope. He was a writer of tragedy, but his Irene gives him no conspicuous rank in that department. As an essayist he merits more consideration; his Ramblers are in every body's hands; about them opinions vary, and I rather believe the style of these essays is not now considered as a good model; this he corrected in his more advanced age, as may be seen in his Lives of the Poets, where his diction, though occasionally elaborate and highly metaphorical, is not nearly so inflated and ponderous, as in the Ramblers. He was an acute and able critic; the enthusiastic admirers of Milton and the friends of Gray will have something to complain of, but criticism is a task, which no man executes to all men's satisfaction. His selection of a certain passage in the Mourning Bride of Congreve, which he extols so rapturously, is certainly a most unfortunate sample; but unless the oversights of a critic are less pardonable than those of other men, we may pass this over in a work of merit, which abounds in beauties far more prominent than its defects, and much more pleasing to contemplate. In works professedly of fancy

he is not very copious; yet in his Rasselas we have much to admire, and enough to make us wish for more. It is the work of an illuminated mind, and offers many wise and deep reflections, cloathed in beautiful and harmonious diction. We are not indeed familiar with such personages as Johnson has imagined for the characters of his fable, but if we are not exceedingly interested in their story, we are infinitely gratified with their conversation and remarks. In conclusion, Johnson's æra was not wanting in men to be distinguished for their talents, yet if one was to be selected out as the first great literary character of the time, I believe all voices would concur in naming him. Let me here insert the following lines, descriptive of his character, though not long since written by me and to be found in a public print——

"On Samuel Johnson.

"Herculean strength and a Stentorian voice,
"Of wit a fund, of words a countless choice:
"In learning rather various than profound,
"In truth intrepid, in religion sound:
"A trembling form and a distorted sight,
"But firm in judgment and in genius bright;

" In controversy seldom known to spare,
" But humble as the Publican in prayer;
" To more, than merited his kindness, kind,
" And, though in manners harsh, of friendly mind;
" Deep ting'd with melancholy's blackest shade,
" And, though prepar'd to die, of death afraid—
" Such Johnson was; of him with justice vain,
" When will this nation see his like again?"

Oliver Goldsmith began at this time to write for the stage, and it is to be lamented that he did not begin at an earlier period of life to turn his genius to dramatic compositions, and much more to be lamented, that, after he had begun, the succeeding period of his life was so soon cut off. There is no doubt but his genius, when more familiarised to the business, would have inspired him to accomplish great things. His first comedy of *The Good-natured Man* was read and applauded in its manuscript by Edmund Burke, and the circle, in which he then lived and moved: under such patronage it came with those testimonials to the director of Covent Garden theatre, as could not fail to open all the avenues to the stage, and bespeak all the favour and attention from the performers and the public, that the applauding voice of him, whose applause was

fame itself, could give it. This comedy has enough to justify the good opinion of its literary patron, and secure its author against any loss of reputation, for it has the stamp of a man of talents upon it, though its popularity with the audience did not quite keep pace with the expectations, that were grounded on the fiat it had antecedently been honoured with. It was a first effort however, and did not discourage its ingenious author from invoking his Muse a second time. It was now, whilst his labours were in projection, that I first met him at the British Coffee-house, as I have already related somewhat out of place. He dined with us as a visitor, introduced as I think by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and we held a consultation upon the naming of his comedy, which some of the company had read, and which he detailed to the rest after his manner with a great deal of good humour. Somebody suggested—*She Stoops to Conquer*—and that title was agreed upon. When I perceived an embarrassment in his manner towards me, which I could readily account for, I lost no time to put him at his ease, and I flatter myself I was successful. As my heart was ever warm towards my contempora-

ries, I did not counterfeit, but really felt a cordial interest in his behalf, and I had soon the pleasure to perceive that he credited me for my sincerity—"You and I," said he, "have "very different motives for resorting to the "stage. I write for money, and care little "about fame—" I was touched by this melancholy confession, and from that moment busied myself assiduously amongst all my connexions in his cause. The whole company pledged themselves to the support of the ingenuous poet, and faithfully kept their promise to him. In fact he needed all that could be done for him, as Mr. Colman, then manager of Covent-Garden theatre, protested against the comedy, when as yet he had not struck upon a name for it. Johnson at length stood forth in all his terrors as champion for the piece, and backed by us his clients and retainers demanded a fair trial. Colman again protested, but, with that salvo for his own reputation, liberally lent his stage to one of the most eccentric productions that ever found its way to it, and *She Stoops to Conquer* was put into rehearsal.

We were not over-sanguine of success, but

perfectly determined to struggle hard for our author: we accordingly assembled our strength at the Shakespear Tavern in a considerable body for an early dinner, where Samuel Johnson took the chair at the head of a long table, and was the life and soul of the corps: the poet took post silently by his side with the Burkes, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Fitzherbert, Caleb Whitefoord and a phalanx of North-British pre-determined applauders, under the banner of Major Mills, all good men and true. Our illustrious president was in inimitable glee, and poor Goldsmith that day took all his raillery as patiently and complacently as my friend Boswell would have done any day, or every day of his life. In the mean time we did not forget our duty, and though we had a better comedy going, in which Johnson was chief actor, we betook ourselves in good time to our separate and allotted posts, and waited the awful drawing up of the curtain. As our stations were pre-concerted, so were our signals for plaudits arranged and determined upon in a manner, that gave every one his cue where to look for them, and how to follow them up.

We had amongst us a very worthy and effi-

cient member, long since lost to his friends and the world at large, Adam Drummond, of amiable memory, who was gifted by nature with the most sonorous, and at the same time the most contagious, laugh, that ever echoed from the human lungs. The neighing of the horse of the son of Hystaspes was a whisper to it; the whole thunder of the theatre could not drown it. This kind and ingenuous friend fairly fore-warned us that he knew no more when to give his fire than the cannon did, that was planted on a battery. He desired therefore to have a flapper at his elbow, and I had the honour to be deputed to that office. I planted him in an upper box, pretty nearly over the stage, in full view of the pit and galleries, and perfectly well situated to give the echo all its play through the hollows and recesses of the theatre. The success of our manœuvres was complete. All eyes were upon Johnson, who sate in a front row of a side box, and when he laughed every body thought themselves warranted to roar. In the mean time my friend followed signals with a rattle so irresistibly comic, that, when he had repeated it several times, the attention of the spectators

was so engrossed by his person and performances, that the progress of the play seemed likely to become a secondary object, and I found it prudent to insinuate to him that he might halt his music without any prejudice to the author; but alas, it was now too late to rein him in; he had laughed upon my signal where he found no joke, and now unluckily he fancied that he found a joke in almost every thing that was said; so that nothing in nature could be more mal-a-propos than some of his bursts every now and then were. These were dangerous moments, for the pit began to take umbrage; but we carried our play through, and triumphed not only over Colman's judgment, but our own.

As the life of poor Oliver Goldsmith was now fast approaching to its period, I conclude my account of him with gratitude for the epitaph he bestowed on me in his poem called *Retaliation*. It was upon a proposal started by Edmund Burke, that a party of friends, who had dined together at Sir Joshua Reynolds's and my house, should meet at the St. James's Coffee-House, which accordingly took place, and was occasionally repeated with

much festivity and good fellowship. Dr. Bernard, Dean of Derry, a very amiable and old friend of mine, Dr. Douglas, since Bishop of Salisbury, Johnson, David Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Oliver Goldsmith, Edmund and Richard Burke, Hickey, with two or three others constituted our party. At one of these meetings an idea was suggested of extemporary epitaphs upon the parties present; pen and ink were called for, and Garrick off hand wrote an epitaph with a good deal of humour upon poor Goldsmith, who was the first in jest, as he proved to be in reality, that we committed to the grave. The dean also gave him an epitaph, and Sir Joshua illuminated the dean's verses with a sketch of his bust in pen and ink inimitably caricatured. Neither Johnson, nor Burke wrote any thing, and when I perceived Oliver was rather sore, and seemed to watch me with that kind of attention, which indicated his expectation of something in the same kind of burlesque with their's, I thought it time to press the joke no further, and wrote a few couplets at a side table, which when I had finished and was called upon by the company to exhibit, Goldsmith with

much agitation besought me to spare him, and I was about to tear them, when Johnson wrested them out of my hand, and in a loud voice read them at the table. I have now lost all recollection of them, and in fact they were little worth remembering, but as they were serious and complimentary, the effect they had upon Goldsmith was the more pleasing for being so entirely unexpected. The concluding line, which is the only one I can call to mind, was—

"All mourn the poet, I lament the man—"

This I recollect, because he repeated it several times, and seemed much gratified by it. At our next meeting he produced his epitaphs as they stand in the little posthumous poem above-mentioned, and this was the last time he ever enjoyed the company of his friends.

As he had served up the company under the similitude of various sorts of meat, I had in the mean time figured them under that of liquors, which little poem I rather think was printed, but of this I am not sure. Goldsmith sickened and died, and we had one concluding meeting at my house, when it was de-

cided to publish his Retaliation, and Johnson at the same time undertook to write an epitaph for our lamented friend, to whom we proposed to erect a monument by subscription in Westminster-Abbey. This epitaph Johnson executed: but in the criticism, that was attempted against it, and in the Round-Robin signed at Mr. Beauclerc's house I had no part. I had no acquaintance with that gentleman, and was never in his house in my life.

Thus died Oliver Goldsmith in his chambers in the Temple at a period of life when his genius was yet in its vigour, and fortune seemed disposed to smile upon him. I have heard Dr. Johnson relate with infinite humour the circumstance of his rescuing him from a ridiculous dilemma by the purchase money of his Vicar of Wakefield, which he sold on his behalf to Dodsley, and, as I think, for the sum of ten pounds only. He had run up a debt with his landlady for board and lodging of some few pounds, and was at his wit's-end how to wipe off the score and keep a roof over his head, except by closing with a very staggering proposal on her part, and taking his creditor to wife, whose charms were very far from alluring,

whilst her demands were extremely urgent. In this crisis of his fate he was found by Johnson in the act of meditating on the melancholy alternative before him. He shewed Johnson his manuscript of The Vicar of Wakefield, but seemed to be without any plan, or even hope, of raising money upon the disposal of it; when Johnson cast his eye upon it, he discovered something that gave him hope, and immediately took it to Dodsley, who paid down the price above-mentioned in ready money, and added an eventual condition upon its future sale. Johnson described the precautions he took in concealing the amount of the sum he had in hand, which he prudently administered to him by a guinea at a time. In the event he paid off the landlady's score, and redeemed the person of his friend from her embraces. Goldsmith had the joy of finding his ingenious work succeed beyond his hopes, and from that time began to place a confidence in the resources of his talents, which thenceforward enabled him to keep his station in society, and cultivate the friendship of many eminent persons, who, whilst they smiled at his eccen-

tricities, esteemed him for his genius and good qualities.

My father had been translated to the see of Kilmore, which placed him in a more civilised country, and lodged him in a more comfortable house. I continued my yearly visits, and again went over to Ireland with part of my family, and passed my whole summer recess at Kilmore. I had with unspeakable regret perceived some symptoms of an alarming nature about him, which seemed to indicate the breaking up of a most excellent constitution, which, nursed by temperance and regularity, had hitherto been blest with such an uninterrupted course of health, that he had never through his whole life been confined a single day to his bed, except when he had the small pox in his childhood. In all his appetites and passions he was the most moderate of men: ever cheerful in his family and with his friends, but never yielding to the slightest excess. My mother in the mean time had been gradually sinking into a state of extreme debility and loss of health, and I plainly saw that my father's ceaseless agitation and anxiety on her

account had deeply affected his constitution. He had flattered me with the hope that he would attempt a journey to England with her, and in that expectation, when my time was expired, I painfully took leave of him—and, alas! never saw him, or my mother, more.

In the winter of that same year, whilst I was at Bath by advice for my own health, I received the first afflicting intelligence of his death from Primate Robinson, who loved him truly and lamented him most sincerely. This sad event was speedily succeeded by the death of my mother, whose weak and exhausted frame sunk under the blow: those senses so acute, and that mind so richly endowed, were in an instant taken from her, and after languishing in that melancholy state for a short but distressful period, she followed him to the grave.

Thus was I bereft of father and mother without the consolation of having paid them the last mournful duties of a son. One surviving sister, the best and most benevolent of human beings, attended them in their last moments, and performed those duties, which my hard fortune would not suffer me to share.

In a small patch of ground, enclosed with stone walls, adjoining to the church-yard of Kilmore, but not within the pale of the consecrated ground, my father's corpse was interred beside the grave of the venerable and exemplary Bishop Bedel. This little spot, as containing the remains of that good and great man, my father had fenced and guarded with particular devotion, and he had more than once pointed it out to me as his destined grave, saying to me, as I well remember, in the words of the Old Prophet of Beth-el, "When I am "dead, then bury me in this sepulchre, where- "in the man of God is buried; lay my bones "beside his bones—" This injunction was exactly fulfilled, and the protestant Bishop of Kilmore, the mild friend of mankind, the impartial benefactor and unprejudiced protector of his Catholic poor, who almost adored him whilst living, was not permitted to deposit his remains within the precincts of his own church-yard, though they howled over his grave, and rent the air with their savage lamentations.

Thus, whilst their carcasses monopolise the consecrated ground, his bones and the bones of

Bedel make sacred the unblest soil, in which they moulder; but whilst I believe and am persuaded, that his incorruptible is received into bliss eternal, what concerns it me where his corruptible is laid? The corpse of my lamented mother, the instructress of my youth, the friend and charm of my maturer years, is deposited by his side.

My father's patronage at Kilmore was very considerable, and this he strictly bestowed upon the clergy of his diocese, promoting the curates to the smaller livings, as vacancies occurred, and exacting from every man, whom he put into a living, where there was no parsonage-house, a solemn promise to build; but I am sorry to say that in no single instance was that promise fulfilled; which breach of faith gave him great concern, and in the cases of some particular friends, whom he had promoted in full persuasion of their keeping faith with him, afflicted him very sensibly, as I had occasion to know and lament. The opportunities he had of benefiting his fortune and family by fines, and the lapse of leases, which might have been considerable, he honourably declined to avail himself of, for when he had

tendered his renewals upon the most moderate terms, and these had been delayed or rejected in his days of health, he peremptorily withstood their offers, when he found his life was hastening to its period, esteeming it according to his high sense of honour not perfectly fair to his successor to take what he called the packing-penny, and sweep clean before his departure. He left his see therefore much more valuable than he found it by this liberal and disinterested conduct, by which it was natural to hope he had secured to his executors the good offices and assistance of his successor in recovering the outstanding arrears due to his survivors—but in that hope we were shamefully disappointed; neither these arrears, nor even his legal demands for monies expended on improvements, beneficial to the demesne, and regularly certified by his diocesan, could be recovered by me for my sister's use, till the Lord Primate took the cause in hand, and enforced the sluggish and unwilling satisfaction from the bishop, who succeeded him.

Previous to these unhappy events I had written my fourth comedy of *The Choleric Man*, and left it with Mr. Garrick for repe-

sentation. Whilst I was at Bath the rehearsals were going on, and the play was brought upon the stage during my absence. It succeeded to the utmost of my wishes, but when I perceived that the malevolence of the public prints suffered no abatement, and saw myself charged with having vented contemptuous and illiberal speeches in the theatre, where I could not have been, against productions of my contemporaries, which I had neither heard nor seen, galled with such false and cruel aspersions, which, under the pressure of my recent losses and misfortunes, fell on me with accumulated asperity, I was induced to retort upon my defamers, and accordingly prefixed to the printed copy of my comedy *a Dedication to Detraction*, in which I observe that "Ill-"health and other melancholy attentions, which "I need not explain, kept me at a distance "from the scene of its decision—" The chief object of this dedication was directed to a certain tract then in some degree of circulation, entitled *An Essay on the Theatre*, in which the writer professes to draw *a comparison between laughing and sentimental Comedy*, and under the latter description particularly points

his observations at *The Fashionable Lover.*—There is no occasion for me to speak further of this dedication, as it is attached to the comedy, which is yet in print, except to observe that I can still repeat with truth what I there assert to my imaginary patron, that "I can "take my conscience to witness I have paid "him no sacrifice, devoted no time or study "to his service, nor am a man in any respect "qualified to repay his favours—."

Garrick wrote the epilogue to this comedy, as he also did that to the West-Indian, and Mrs. Abington spoke it. That charming actress was now at the height of her fame, and performed the part of Lætitia in a style that gave great support to the representation. The two brothers, formed upon the plan of Terence's Adelphi, were well cast between Mr. King and Mr. Aickin, and Weston personated Jack Nightshade with inimitable humour.—The chief effect in this play is produced by the strong contrast of character between Manlove and the Choleric Man, and again with more comic force between Charles the courtly gentleman and Jack the rustic booby, who at the first meeting with his brother exclaims—"Who

" wou'd think you and I were whelps of the
" same breed? You are as sleek as my lady's
" lap dog, I am rough as a water-spaniel, be-
" daggled and be-mired, as if I had come out
" of the fens with wild fowl; why, I have
" brought off as much soil upon my boots
" only as wou'd set up a Norfolk farmer—"

It was observed of this comedy that the spirit of the two first acts was not kept up through the concluding three, and the general sense of the public was said to confirm this remark, therefore I presume it is true. It was a successful play in its time, though it has not been so often before the public as any of the three, which preceded it, and since Weston's decease it has been consigned to the shelf. If ever there shall be found an editor of my dramatic works as an entire collection, this comedy will stand forward as one of the most prominent amongst them. The plot indeed is not original, but the characters are humorously contrasted, and there is point and spirit in the dialogue. Such as it is, it was the fourth produced in four succeeding seasons, and if I acquired any small share of credit by those, which preceded it, I did not forfeit it by the publica-

tion of this. To this comedy I appositely affixed the following motto from Plautus——

Jam istæc insipientia est
Sic iram in promptu gerere.

In the autumn of this year I made a tour in company with my friend the Earl of Warwick to the Lakes in Cumberland. He took with him Mr. Smith, well known to the public for his elegant designs after nature in Switzerland, Italy and elsewhere: my noble friend himself is a master in the art of drawing and designing landscapes in a bold and striking character, of which our tour afforded a vast variety. Whilst we passed a few days at Keswick, I hastily composed an irregular ode, "which was literally struck out on the spot, and is addressed to the Sun: for as the season was advancing towards winter, we had frequent temptations to invoke that luminary, who was never very gracious to our suit, except whilst we were viewing the lake of Keswick and its accompaniments."

With this invocation my ode commences—

"Soul of the world, refulgent sun,
"Oh, take not from my ravish'd sight

" Those golden beams of living light,
" Nor, ere thy daily course be run
" Precipitate the night.
" Lo, where the ruffian clouds arise,
" Usurp the abdicated skies,
" And seize th' ætherial throne:
" Sullen sad the scene appears,
" Huge *Helvellyn* streams with tears;
" Hark! 'tis giant *Skiddaw's* groan;
" I hear terrific *Laxdoor* roar;
" The sabbath of thy reign is o'er,
" The anarchy's begun.
" Father of light, return; break forth, refulgent Sun!"
&c. &c.

This Ode, with one addressed to Doctor James, was published and sold by Mr. Robson in New Bond-Street in the year 1776, and is I believe to be found in the Tour to the Lakes. The Ode to Doctor Robert James was suggested by the recovery of my second son from a dangerous fever, effected under Providence by his celebrated powders. I am tempted to insert the following short extract, descriptive of the person of Death——

" On his pale steed erect the monarch stands,
" His dirk and javelin glittering in his hands:
" This from a distance deals th' ignoble blow,
" And that dispatches the resisting foe:

" Whilst all beneath him, as he flies,
" Dire are the tossings, deep the cries,
" The landscape darkens and the season dies—"
&c. &c.

These Odes I addressed to Mr. George Romney, then lately returned from pursuing his studies at Rome.

The next piece that I presented to the stage under the management of Mr. Garrick was *Timon of Athens*, altered from Shakespear, to which I prefixed the following Advertisement, when it was published by Becket—

" I wish I could have brought this play upon " the stage with less violence to its author, " and not so much responsibility on my own " part. New characters of necessity require " some display. Many original passages of " the first merit are still retained, and in the " contemplation of them my errors I hope " will be overlooked or forgiven. " In exa- " mining the brilliancy of a diamond few peo- " ple throw away any remarks upon the dul- " ness of the foil—" Barry played the part of Timon, and Mrs. Barry that of Evanthe, which was engrafted on the original for the

purpose of writing up the character of Alcibiades, in which a young actor of the name of Crofts made his first appearance on the stage. As the entire part of Evanthe, and with very few exceptions the whole of Alcibiades are new, the author of this alteration has much to answer for, and much it behoved him to make his new matter harmonize with the old; with what degree of success this is done it scarce becomes me to say; the public approbation seemed to sanction the attempt at the first production of the play, the neglect, with which the stage has passed it over since, disposes us to draw conclusions less in favour of its merit.

As few, who read these memoirs, have ever met, or probably ever will meet with this altered play, which is now out of print, I trust that such at least will forgive me if I extract a short specimen from my own new matter in the second act—

"*Act* 2. *Scene* 3.

"*Lucullus and Lucius.*

Lucul.—"How now, my Lord; in private?

Luc.—"Yes, I thought so,

" Till an unwelcome intermeddling Lord
" Stept in and ask'd the question.

Lucul.—" What, in anger!
" By heav'ns I'll gall him! for he stands before me
" In the broad sunshine of Lord Timon's bounty,
" And throws my better merits into shade. *(Aside.)*

Luc.—" Now would I kill him if I durst. *(Aside.)*

Lucul.—" Methinks
" You look but coldly. What has cross'd your suit?
" Alas, poor Lucius! but I read your fate
" In that unkind-one's frown.

Luc.—" No doubt, my Lord,
" You, that receive them ever, are well vers'd
" In the unkind-one's frowns: as the clear stream
" Reflects your person, so may you espy,
" In the sure mirror of her scornful brow
" The clouded picture of your own despair.

Lucul.—" Come, you presume too far; talk not thus idly
" To me, who know you.

Luc.—" Know me?

Lucul.—" Aye, who know you,
" For one, that courses up and down on errands,
" A stale retainer at Lord Timon's table;
" A man grown great by making legs and cringes,
" By winding round a wanton spendthrift's heart,
" And gulling him at pleasure—Now do I know you?

Luc.—" Gods, must I bear this? bear it from Lucullus?
" I, who first brought thee to Lord Timon's stirrup,
" Set thee in sight and breath'd into thine ear
" The breath of hope? What hadst thou been, in-
" grateful,

" But that I took up Jove's imperfect work,
" Gave thee a shape and made thee into man?

Alcibiades to them.

Alcib.—" What, wrangling, Lords, like hungry curs for
" crusts?
" Away with this unmanly war of words!
" Pluck forth your shining rapiers from their shells,
" And level boldly at each other's hearts.
" Hearts did I say? Your hearts are gone from
" home,
" And hid in Timon's coffers—Fie upon it!

Luc.—" My Lord Lucullus, I shall find a time.

Alcib.—" Hah! find a time! the brave make time and
" place.
" Gods, gods, what things are men! you'll find a
" time?
" A time for what?—To murder him in's sleep?
" The man, who wrongs me, at the altar's foot
" I'll seize, yea, drag him from the shelt'ring ægis
" Of stern Minerva.

Luc.—" Aye; 'tis your profession.

Alcib.—" Down on your knees and thank the gods for that,
" Or woe for Athens, were it left to such
" As you are to defend. Do ye not hate
" Each other heartily? Yet neither dares
" To bare his trembling falchion to the sun.
" How tame they dangle on your coward thighs!

Lucul.—" We are no soldiers, Sir.

Alcib.—" No, ye are Lords:
" A lazy, proud, unprofitable crew:
" The vermin gender'd from the rank corruption

" Of a luxurious state—No soldiers, say you ?
" And wherefore are ye none ? Have ye not life,
" Friends, honour, freedom, country to defend ?
" He, that hath these, by nature is a soldier,
" And, when he wields his sword in their defence,
" Instinctively fulfils the end he lives for—"
&c. &c.

When Moody from the excellence of his acting in the part of Major O'Flaherty, became the established performer of Irish characters, I wrote in compliance with his wishes another Hibernian upon a smaller scale, and composed the entertainment of *The Note of Hand*, or *Trip to Newmarket*, which was the last piece of my writing, which Mr. Garrick produced upon his stage before he disposed of his property in Drury-Lane theatre, and withdrew from business.

During my residence at Bath I had been greatly pleased with the performance of the part of Shylock by Mr. Henderson, and, upon conversing with him, found that his wishes strongly pointed to an engagement, if that could be obtained, at Drury-Lane, then under the direction of Mr. Garrick. When I had seen him in different characters, and became

confirmed in my opinion of his merit, I warmly recommended him to Mr. Garrick, and was empowered to contract for his engagement upon terms, that to my judgment, and that of other intermediate friends, appeared to be extremely reasonable. At first I conceived the negociation as good as concluded, but some reports, that rather clashed with mine, rendered Mr. Garrick cool in the business, and disposed to consult other opinions as to Mr. Henderson's abilities; and amongst these he seemed greatly to depend upon his brother George's judgment, whose report was by no means of the same sanguine complexion with mine.—Poor George had come to Bath in a lamentable state of health, and must have seen Henderson with distempered eyes to err so egregiously as he did in his account of him. It proved however in the upshot decisive against my advice, and after a languishing negociation, which got at length into other hands than mine, Garrick made the transfer of his property in the theatre without the name of Henderson upon the roll of his performers.—Truth obliges me to say that the negociation in all its parts and passages was not creditable

to Mr. Garrick, and left impressions on the mind of Henderson, that time did not speedily wear out. He had wit, infinite pleasantry and inimitable powers of mimickry, which he felt himself privileged to employ, and employed only too successfully. The season of the winter theatres passed over, and when the Haymarket house opened, Henderson came from Bath with all the powers of his genius on the alert, and upon the summer stage fully justified every thing that I and others had said of him through the winter, and established himself completely in the public favour.—A great resort of men of talents now flocked around him; the town considered him as a man injuriously rejected, and though, when they imputed it to envy I am sure they were mistaken, yet when Garrick found that by lending his ear to foolish opinions, and quibbling about terms, he had missed the credit of engaging the best actor of the time, himself excepted, it is not to be wondered at if the praise, bestowed on Henderson's performances, was not the most agreeable topic, that could be chosen for his entertainment. He could not indeed always avoid hearing these ap-

plauses, but he did not hold himself obliged to second them, and when curiosity drew him to the summer theatre to see Henderson in the part of Shylock, he said nothing in his dispraise, but he discovered great merit in *Tubal*, which of course had been the cast of some second-rate performer.

Henderson in the mean time was transferred from the Haymarket theatre to Drury-Lane, under the direction of Mr. Sheridan, where I brought out my tragedy of *The Battle of Hastings*, in which he played the part of Edgar Atheling, not indeed with the happiest effect, for he did not possess the graces of person or deportment, and as that character demanded both, an actor might have been found, who with inferior abilities would have been a fitter representative of it. As for the play itself, it was published and is to be found in more collections than one; its readers will probably be of opinion, that is it better written than planned; a judgment, to which I shall most readily submit, not only in this instance but in several others.

About this time died the earl of Halifax.—

He had filled the high stations of First Lord of Trade and Plantations, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Principal Secretary of State, First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Lieutenant of the county of Northampton and Knight of the Garter. He had no son, and his title is extinct. His fine mansion and estate of Stansted, left to him by Mr. Lumley, was sold after his decease. I saw him in his last illness, when his constitution was an absolute wreck: I was subpœna'd to give evidence on this point before the Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, and according to my conscience deposed what was my opinion of his hopeless state; his physician Sir Noah Thomas, whose professional judgment had justly more authority and influence than mine, by his deposition superseded mine, and the death of his patient very shortly after contradicted his. I never knew that man, whose life, if circumstantially detailed, would furnish a more striking moral and a more tragical catastrophe. Nature endowed him liberally with her gifts, Fortune showered her favours profusely upon him, Providence repeatedly held forth the most extraordinary

vouch-safements—What a mournful retrospection! I am not bound to dwell upon it. I turn from it with horror.

A brighter scene now meets me, for whilst I was yet a subaltern in the Board of Trade, uncomfortably executing the office of clerk of the reports, by the accession of Lord George Germain to the seals for the colonial department I had a new principal to look up to. I had never been in a room with him in my life, except during his trial at the Horse-Guards for the affair of Minden, which I attended through the whole of its progress, and regularly reported what occurred to Mr. Dodington, who was then out of town; some of his letters I preserved, but of my own, according to custom, I took no copies. When Lord George had taken the seals, I asked my friend Colonel James Cunningham to take me with him to Pall-Mall, which he did, and the ceremony of paying my respects was soon dismissed. I confess I thought my new chief was quite as cold in his manner as a minister need be, and rather more so than my intermediate friend had given me reason to expect. I was now living in great intimacy with the Duke of Dorset, and

asked him to do me that grace with his uncle, which the honour of being acknowledged by him as his friend would naturally have obtained for me. This I am confident he would readily have done but for reasons, which precluded all desire on my part to say another word upon the business. I was therefore left to make my own way with a perfect stranger, whilst I was in actual negociation with Mr. Pownall for the secretaryship, and had understood Lord Clare to be friendly to our treaty in the very moment, when he ceased to be our first lord, and the power of accommodating us in our wishes was shifted from his hands into those of Lord George. I considered it therefore as an opportunity gone by, and entertained no further hopes of succeeding. A very short time sufficed to confirm the idea I had entertained of Lord George's character for decision and dispatch in business: there was at once an end to all our circumlocutory reports and inefficient forms, that had only impeded business, and substituted ambiguity for precision: there was (as William Gerard Hamilton, speaking of Lord George, truly observed to me) no trash in his mind; he studied no choice phrases, no

superfluous words, nor ever suffered the clearness of his conceptions to be clouded by the obscurity of his expressions, for these were the simplest and most unequivocal that could be made use of for explaining his opinions, or dictating his instructions. In the mean while he was so momentarily punctual to his time, so religiously observant of his engagements, that we, who served under him in office, felt the sweets of the exchange we had so lately made in the person of our chief.

I had now no other prospect but that of serving in my subordinate situation under an easy master with security and comfort, for as I was not flattered with the show of any notices from him but such as I might reasonably expect, I built no hopes upon his favour, nor allowed myself to think I was in any train of succeeding in my treaty with our secretary for his office; and as I had reason to believe he was equally happy with myself in serving under such a principal, I took for granted he would move no further in the business.

One day, as Lord George was leaving the office, he stopt me on the outside of the door, at the head of the stairs, and invited me to pass

some days with him and his family at Stoneland near Tunbridge Wells. It was on my part so unexpected, that I doubted if I had rightly understood him, as he had spoken in a low and submitted voice, as his manner was, and I consulted his confidential secretary Mr. Doyley, whether he would advise me to the journey. He told me that he knew the house was filled from top to bottom with a large party, that he was sure there would be no room for me, and dissuaded me from the undertaking. I did not quite follow his advice by neglecting to present myself, but I resolved to secure my retreat to Tunbridge Wells, and kept my chaise in waiting to make good my quarters. When I arrived at Stoneland I was met at the door by Lord George, who soon discovered the precaution I had taken, and himself conducting me to my bed-chamber, told me it had been reserved for me, and ever after would be set apart as mine, where he hoped I would consent to find myself at home. This was the man I had esteemed so cold, and thus was I at once introduced to the commencement of a friendship, which day by day improved, and which no one word or action of

his life to come ever for an instant interrupted or diminished.

Shortly after this it came to his knowledge that there had been a treaty between Mr. Pownall and me for his resignation of the place of Secretary, and he asked me what had passed; I told him how it stood, and what the conditions were, that my superior in office expected for the accommodation. I had not yet mentioned this to him, and probably never should. He said he would take it into his own hands, and in a few days signified the king's pleasure that Mr. Pownall's resignation was accepted, and that I should succeed him as Secretary in clear and full enjoyment of the place, without any compensation whatsoever. Thus was I, beyond all hope and without a word said to me, that could lead me to expect a favour of that sort, promoted by surprise to a very advantageous and desirable situation. I came to my office at the hour appointed, not dreaming of such an event, and took my seat at the adjoining table, when, Mr. Pownall being called out of the room, Lord George turned round to me and bade me take his chair at the bottom of the table, announcing to the Board his ma-

jesty's commands, as above recited, with a positive prohibition of all stipulations. When I had endeavoured to express myself as properly on the occasion, as my agitated state of spirits would allow of, I remember Lord George made answer, "That if I was as well pleased upon "receiving his majesty's commands, as he was "in being the bearer of them, I was indeed "very happy."—If I served him truly, honestly and ardently ever after, till I followed him to the grave, where is my merit? How could I do otherwise?

The conflict in America was now raging at its height; that was a business out of my office to be concerned in, and I willingly pass it over; but it was in my way to know the effects it had upon the anxious spirit of my friend, and very much it was both my wish and my endeavour by every means in my capacity to be helpful at those hours, which were necessary for his relaxation, and take to my share as many of those burthensome and vexatious concerns, as without intrusion upon other people's offices I could relieve him from. All that I could I did, and as I was daily with him, and never out of call, I reflect with comfort, that

there were occasions when my zeal was not unprofitably exerted for his alleviation and repose. I might say more, for those were trying and unquiet times. It is not a very safe or enviable predicament to be marked out for a known attachment to an unpopular character, and be continually under arms to turn out and encounter the prejudices of mankind. There is a middle kind of way, which some men can hit off, between doing all and doing nothing, which saves appearances and satisfies easy consciences; but some consciences are not so easily satisfied.

I had now four sons at Westminster-school boarding at one house, and my two daughters coming into the world, so that the accession to my circumstances, which my promotion in office gave me, put me greatly at my ease, and enabled me to press their education with advantage. My eldest son Richard went through Westminster with the reputation of an excellent school scholar, and I admitted him of Trinity College, but in one of his vacations having prevailed with me to let him volunteer a cruize with Sir Charles Hardy, then commander of the home fleet, the rage of service

seized him, and by his importunity I may say in the words of Polonius he *wrung from me my slow leave* to let him enter himself an ensign in the first regiment of foot-guards. This at once gave fire to the train, and the three remaining heroes breathed nothing but war: my second boy George took to the sea, and sailed for America; my third Charles enrolled himself an ensign in the tenth, and my youngest William disposed of himself as my second had done, and also took his departure for America under the command of the late Sir Richard Hughes.

I had been dispossessed of my delightful residence at Tyringham, near to which Mr. Praed, the present possessor, has now built a splendid mansion, and I had taken a house at Tetworth in Bedfordshire to be near my kind and ever honoured friend Lady Frances Burgoyne, sister to Lord Halifax. Here I passed the summer recesses, and in one of these I wrote the Opera of *Calypso*, for the purpose of introducing to the public the compositions of Mr. Butler, then a young man, newly returned from Italy, where he had studied under Piccini, and given early proofs of his genius. He

passed the summer with me at Tetworth, and there he wrote the music for Calypso in the style of a serious opera. Calypso was brought out at Covent Garden, but that theatre was not by any means possessed of such a strength of vocal performers, as have of late years belonged to it. Mrs. Kennedy in the part of Telemachus, and Leoni in that of Proteus, were neither of them very eminently qualified to grace the action of an opera, yet as that was a consideration subordinate to the music, it was to them that Mr. Butler addressed his chief attention, and looked up for his support. I believe I may venture to say that more beautiful and original compositions were never presented to the English stage by a native master, though I am not unmindful of the fame of Artaxerxes; but Calypso, supported only by Leoni and Mrs. Kennedy, did not meet success proportioned to its merit, and I should humbly conceive upon the same stage, which has since been so powerfully mounted by Braham, Incledon and Storace, it might have been revived with brilliant effect. Why Mr. Butler did not publish his music, or a selection at least of those airs, which were most applauded, I cannot tell; but

so it was, and the score now remains in the depôt of Covent Garden, whilst a few only of the songs, and those in manuscript, are in the possession of my second daughter Sophia, whom he instructed in singing, and with the aid of great natural talents on her part, accomplished her very highly. Calypso as a drama has been published, therefore of my share in it as an opera I need not say much; it is before the reader, but I confess I lament that music, which I conceive to be so exquisitely beautiful, should be buried in oblivion. Mr. Butler had been long since settled at Edinburgh as a teacher and writer of music, and is well known to the professors and admirers of that art.

That I may not again recur to my dramatic connexions with this ingenious composer, I will here observe that in the following season I wrote a comic opera, which I entitled *The Widow of Delphi*, or *The Descent of the Deities*, the songs of which he set to music. Mr. Butler published a selection of songs, &c. from this opera, but as I was going out of England I did not send my copy to the press, and having now had it many years in my hands, by the frequent revisions and correc-

tions, which I have had opportunities of giving to this manuscript, I am encouraged to believe that if I, or any after me, shall send it into the world, this drama will be considered as one of my most classical and creditable productions.

Having adverted to the happiness and honour, which I enjoyed in the friendship of Lady Frances Burgoyne, it occurs to me to relate the part, which at her request I undertook, in the behalf of the unfortunate Robert Perreau, when under trial for his life. "The defence, which he read at the bar, was to a word drawn up by me, under the revision of his counsel Mr. Dunning, who did not change a syllable. I dined with Garrick on the very day when Robert Perreau had delivered it in court; there was a large company, and he was expatiating upon the effect of it, for he had been present; he even detailed the heads of it with considerable accuracy, and was so rapturous in his praises of it, that he predicted confidently, though not truly, that the man, who drew up that defence, had saved the prisoner's life, and what would he not give to know who it was? I confess my vanity was strongly moved to tell him; but he shortly after found it out, and

perhaps repented of his hyperboles, for it was not good policy in him to over-praise a writer for the stage. When poor Dodd fell under the like misfortune, he applied to me in the first instance for the like good offices, but as soon as I understood that application had been made to Dr. Johnson, and that he was about to be taken under his shield, I did what every other friend to the unhappy would have done, consigned him to the stronger advocate, convinced that if the powers of Johnson could not move mercy to reach his lamentable case, there was no further hope in man; his penitence alone could save him.

I had known Sir George Brydges Rodney in early life, and whilst he was residing in France, pending the uneasy state of his affairs at home, had spared no pains to serve his interest and pave the way for his return to his own country, where I was not without hopes by the recommendation of Lord George Germain to procure him an employment worthy of his talents and high station in the navy. I drew up from his minutes a memorial of his services, and petitioned for employ: he came home at the risque of his liberty to refute some

malicious imputations, that had been glanced at his character: this he effectually and honourably accomplished, and I was furnished with testimonials very creditable to him as an officer; his situation in the mean while was very uncomfortable and his exertions circumscribed, yet in this pressure of his affairs, to mark his readiness and zeal for service, he addressed a letter to the king, tendering himself to serve as volunteer under an admiral, then going out, who if I do not mistake, was his junior on the list. In this forlorn unfriended state, with nothing but exclusion and despair before his eyes, when not a ray of hope beamed upon him from the admiralty, and he dared not set a foot beyond the limits of his privilege, I had the happy fortune to put in train that statement of his claim for service and employ, which through the immediate application of Lord George, taking all the responsibility on himself, obtained for that adventurous and gallant admiral the command of that squadron, which on its passage to the West Indies made capture of the Spanish fleet fitted out for the Caraccas. The degree of gratification, which I then experienced, is not

easily to be described. It was not only that of a triumph gained, but of a terror dismissed, for the West India merchants had been alarmed and clamoured against the appointment so generally and so decidedly as to occasion no small uneasiness to my friend and patron, and drew from him something that resembled a remonstrance for the risque I had exposed him to. But in the brilliancy of this exploit all was done away, and past alarms were only recollected to contrast the joy which this success diffused.

Here I hope to be forgiven if I record an answer of Lord George Germain's to an officious gentleman, who upon some reference to me in his concerns expressed himself with surprise at the degree of influence which I appeared to have—"You are very right," replied my friend, "that gentleman has a great deal "to do with me and my affairs, and if you can "find any other to take his place as disinte- "restedly attached to me and as capable of "serving me, I am confident he will hold him- "self very highly obliged to you for relieving "him from a burden, that brings him neither

" profit nor advantage, and only subjects him " to such remarks, as you have now been " making—".

It happened to me to be present, and sitting next to Admiral Rodney at table, when the thought seemed first to occur to him of breaking the French line by passing through it in the heat of the action. It was at Lord George Germain's house at Stoneland after dinner, when having asked a number of questions about the manœuvring of columns, and the effect of charging with them on a line of infantry, he proceeded to arrange a parcel of cherry stones, which he had collected from the table, and forming them as two fleets drawn up in line and opposed to each other, he at once arrested our attention, which had not been very generally engaged by his preparatory enquiries, by declaring he was determined so to pierce the enemy's line of battle, (arranging his manœuvre at the same time on the table) if ever it was his fortune to bring them into action. I dare say this passed with some as mere rhapsody, and all seemed to regard it as a very perilous and doubtful experiment, but landsmen's doubts and difficulties made no impression on the ad-

miral, who having seized the idea held it fast, and in his eager animated way went on manœuvring his cherry stones, and throwing his enemy's representatives into such utter confusion, that already possessed of that victory in imagination, which in reality he lived to gain, he concluded his process by swearing he would lay the French admiral's flag at his sovereign's feet; a promise which he actually pledged to his majesty in his closet, and faithfully and gloriously performed.

He was a singular and extraordinary man; there were some prominent and striking eccentricities about him, which on a first acquaintance might dismiss a cursory observer with inadequate and false impressions of his real character; for he would very commonly indulge himself in a loose and heedless style of talking, which for a time might intercept and screen from observation the sound good sense that he possessed, and the strength and dignity of mind, that were natural to him. Neither ought it to be forgotten that the sea was his element, and it was there, and not on land, that the standard ought to be planted by which his merits should be measured. We are

apt to set that man down as vain-glorious and unwise, who fights battles over the table, and in the ardour of his conversation though amongst enviers and enemies, keeps no watch upon his words, confiding in their candour and believing them his friends. Such a man was Admiral Lord Rodney, whom history will record amongst the foremost of our naval heroes, and whoever doubts his courage might as well dispute against the light of the sun at noon-day.

That he carried this projected manœuvre into operation, and that the effect of it was successfully decisive all the world knows. My friend Sir Charles Douglas, captain of the fleet, confessed to me that he himself had been adverse to the experiment, and in discussing it with the admiral had stated his objections; to these he got no other answer but that "his "counsel was not called for; he required obe- "dience only, he did not want advice—" Sir Charles also told me that whilst the project was in operation, (the battle then raging) his own attention being occupied by the gallant defence made by the French Glorieux against

the ships that were pouring their fire into her, upon his crying out—"Behold, Sir George, "the Greeks and Trojans contending for the "body of Patroclus!—" The admiral, then pacing the quarter deck in great agitation pending the experiment of his manœuvre, (which in the instance of one ship had unavoidably miscarried) peevishly exclaimed—"Damn the Greeks and damn the Trojans; "I have other things to think of—" When in a few minutes after, his supporting ship having led through the French line in a gallant style, turning with a smile of joy to Sir Charles Douglas, he cried out—"Now my "dear friend, I am at the service of your "Greeks and Trojans, and the whole of Ho-"mer's Iliad, or as much of it as you please, "for the enemy is in confusion, and our vic-"tory is secure—" This anecdote, correctly as I relate it, I had from that gallant officer, untimely lost to his country, whose candour scorned to rob his admiral of one leaf of his laurels, and who, disclaiming all share in the manœuvre, nay confessing he had objected to it, did in the most pointed and decided terms

again and again repeat his honourable attestations of the courage and conduct of his commanding officer on that memorable day.

In a short time after, when, upon a change of the administration, this victorious admiral was superseded and called home, he confirmed by his practice that maxim, which he took every opportunity to inculcate, (and a very wise one and well worthy of being recorded it is,) viz.—"That our naval officers have no-"thing to do with parties and politics, being "simply bound to carry their instructions into "execution, to the best of their abilities, with-"out deliberating about men and measures, "which forms no part of their duty, and for "which they are in no degree responsible—." It was to this transaction I alluded in the following lines, which I wrote and inclosed to Lord Mansfield about this time. I had the honour and happiness of enjoying his society frequently, but the immediate reason for my addressing him in this style has no connexion with the subject here referred to——

To the Earl of Mansfield.

"Shall merit find no shelter but the grave,
"And envy still pursue the wise and brave?

" Sticks the leech close to life, and only drops
" When its food fails and the heart's current stops?
" Though sculptur'd laurels grace the hero's bust,
" And tears are mingled with the poet's dust,
" Review their sad memorials, you will find
" This fell by faction, that in misery pin'd.
" When France and Spain the subject ocean swept,
" Whilst Briton's tame inglorious lion slept,
" Or lashing up his courage now and then,
" Turn'd out and growl'd, and then turn'd in again,
" Rodney in that ill-omen'd hour arose,
" Crush'd his own first and next his country's foes;
" Though all that fate allow'd was nobly won,
" Envy could squint at something still undone;
" Injurious faction stript him of command,
" And snatch'd the helm from his victorious hand,
" Summon'd the nation's brave defender home,
" Prejudg'd his cause and warn'd him to his doom;
" Whilst hydra-headed malice open'd wide
" Her thousand mouths, and bay'd him till he died.
" The poet's cause comes next—and you my Lord,
" The Muse's friend, will take a poet's word;
" Trust me our province is replete with pain;
" They say we're irritable, envious, vain:
" They say—and Time has varnish'd o'er the lie
" Till it assumes Truth's venerable dye—
" That wits, like falcons soaring for their prey,
" Pounce every wing that flutters in their way,
" Plunder each rival songster's tuneful breast
" To deck with others plumes their own dear nest;

" They say—but 'tis an office I disclaim
" To brush their cobwebs from the roll of fame,
" There let the spider hang and work his worst,
" And spin his flimsy venom till he burst;
" Reptiles beneath the holiest shrine may dwell,
" And toads engender in the purest well.
" Genius must pay its tax like other wares
" According to the value which it bears;
" On sterling worth detraction's stamp is laid,
" As gold before 'tis current is assay'd.
" Fame is a debt time present never pays,
" But leaves it on the score to future days;
" And why is restitution thus deferr'd
" Of long arrears from year to year incurr'd?
" Why to posterity this labour given
" To crush out frauds and set defaulters even?
" If our sons hear our praise 'tis well, and yet
" Praise in the father's ear had sounded sweet.
" Still there is one exception we must own,
" Whom all conspire to praise, and one alone;
" One on whose living brow we plant the wreath,
" And almost deify on this side death:
" He in the plaudits of the present age
" Already reads his own historic page,
" And, though preëminence is under heav'n
" The last of crimes by man to be forgiv'n,
" Justice her own vice-gerent will defend,
" The orphan's father and the widow's friend;
" Truth, virtue, genius mingle beams so bright,
" Envy is dazzl'd with excess of light;

" Detraction's tongue scarce stammers out a fault,
" And faction blushes for its own assault.
" His is the happy gift, the nameless grace,
" That shapes and fits the man to every place,
" The gay companion at the social board,
" The guide of councils, or the senate's lord,
" Now regulates the law's discordant strife,
" Now balances the scale of death or life,
" Sees guilt engendering in the human heart,
" And strips from falsehood's face the mask of art.
" Whether, assembled with the wise and great,
" He stands the pride and pillar of the state,
" With well-weigh'd argument distinct and clear
" Confirms the judgment and delights the ear,
" Or in the festive circle deigns to sit
" Attempering wisdom with the charms of wit-
" Blest talent, form'd to profit and to please,
" To clothe Instruction in the garb of Ease,
" Sublime to rise, or graceful to descend,
" Now save an empire and now cheer a friend.
" More I could add, but you perhaps complain,
" And call it mere creation of the brain;
" Poets you say will flatter—true, they will;
" But I nor inclination have nor skill—
" Where is your model, you will ask me, where?
" Search your own breast, my Lord, you'll find it there."

It is in this period of my life's history, that by accepting a commission, which took me into Spain, I was subjected to events, that

have very strongly contrasted and changed the complexion of my latter days from that of the preceding ones.

I will relate no other circumstances of this negociation than I am in honour and strict conscience warranted to make public. For more than twenty years I have been silent, making no appeals at any time but to my official employers, who were pledged to do me justice. What I gained by those appeals, and how far that justice was administered to me, will appear from the detail, which I am now about to give; and though I hope to render this narrative not unentertaining to my readers, yet I do most faithfully assure them that no tittle of the truth shall be sacrificed to description, being resolved to give no colour to facts and events, but such as they can strictly bear, nor ever knowingly permit a word to stand in these pages inconsistent with that veracity, to which I am so solemnly engaged.

In the year 1780, and about the time of Rodney's capture of the Caracca fleet, I had opportunities of discovering through a secret channel of intelligence many things passing, and some concerting, between the confidential

agents of France and Spain, (particularly the latter) resident in this country, and in private correspondence with the enemies of it. Of these communications I made that use, which my duty dictated, and to my judgment seemed advisable. By these, in the course of their progress, a prospect was opened of a secret negociation with the Minister Florida Blanca, to which I was personally committed, and of course could not decline the undertaking it.—My destination was to repair to the neutral port of Lisbon, there to abide whilst the Abbe Hussey, chaplain to his Catholic Majesty, proceeded to Aranjuez, and by the advice, which he should send me, I was to be governed in the alternative of either going into Spain for the purpose of carrying my instructions into execution, or of returning home by the same ship, that conveyed me thither, which was ordered to wait my determination for the space of three weeks, unless dismissed or employed by me within that period.

I was to take my wife and two daughters Elizabeth and Sophia with me on the pretence of travelling into Italy upon a passport through the Spanish dominions, and having received

my instructions and letters of accreditation from the Earl of Hillsborough, Secretary of State, on the 17th day of April 1780, I took my departure for Portsmouth, there to embark on board his majesty's frigate Milford, which I had particularly asked for, as knowing her character to be that of a remarkable swift sailer. On my arrival at Portsmouth I found she had gone out upon a short cruize after a French privateer, but was expected every hour. On the 21st she came in from her cruize, and I delivered to her Captain Sir William Burnaby two letters from the Admiralty, one directing him to receive me and my family on board, the other to be opened when he came off the Start Point.

This frigate being from long and constant service in a weak and leaky state, on which account Sir William had lately brought her into port, and undergone a court martial in consequence of it, I found him and his officers under some alarm as to the unknown extent of my destination, suspecting that I might be bound to the West Indies, and justly doubting the sea-worthiness of the ship for any distant voyage. On this point I could give them no

satisfaction, but on the day following her arrival, (viz. April the 22d) went on board to assist in adjusting the accommodations for the females of my family.

In consequence of strong and adverse winds we remained at Spithead till the 28th, when at 8 o'clock in the morning we weighed anchor with the wind at south, and brought to at Cowes. Here I fixed three double-headed shot to the box, that contained my papers and instructions, and the wind still hanging in the south-west, foul and unfavourable, it was not till the 2d of May, when upon its veering to the north-east we took our departure in the forenoon from Cowes, and upon its dying away anchored in mid-channel for the night in 20 fathom water, Needle-rocks S. W. by W. Yarmouth S. E. by S.

Being off the Start-point on the 3d instant Sir William Burnaby opened his orders, and with great satisfaction found his destination to be to Lisbon; we saw a large fleet to westward at the Start-point, which proved to be the Quebec trade outward-bound under convoy. On the 6th having passed the Land's-end, we found the fore-mast sprung below the

trussel trees, and by the next day the carpenter had moulded a fish on it, when the gale having freshened with rain and squalls, we struck top-gallants, handed the fore-sail and hove to under the main-sail; on the ninth the gale increased, and having reefed and furled the main-sail, we laid to under the mainstay-sail and mizen-stay-sail: Lat. 49° 4′; Long. 1° 45′ Land's-end.

Our situation now became very uncomfortable, and our safety suspicious, for the sea was truly mountainous, and broke over our low and leaky frigate in a tremendous style, which in the meanwhile occasionally received such hard and heavy shocks, as caused serious apprehensions even in those, to whom dangers were familiar. I had in my passages to Ireland been in angry seas and blowing weather, but nothing I had seen bore any resemblance to the fury of this gale, nor could any thing but the confidence I had reason to place in British seamen, and the exertions, which I witnessed on their part, have stood between me and absolute despair. The dreadful sight and deafening uproar of those tremendous seas, that by turns whelmed us under a canopy of

water, making darkness at mid-day, and rendering every voice inaudible, were as much as my nerves could bear, and whilst the ship was quivering and settling, as I conceived, upon the point of going down, I thought it high time to set out in search of those beloved objects, who had embarked themselves with me, and were as I supposed suffering the extreme of terror and alarm. How greatly was I mistaken in the calculation of their fortitude! I found my wife, then far gone with child, in her cot within the cabin, the water flowing through it like a sluice, so perfectly collected and composed, that I forbore to speak of the situation we were in, and did not hint at the purpose, which brought me to her; but she, who knew too well what was passing to be deceived as to the motive of my coming to her, said to me—"You are alarmed I believe; so "am not I. We are in a British ship of war, "manned with British seamen, and, if we are "in danger, which I conclude we are, I don't "doubt but they know how to carry us through "it." Thus divested of my alarm by the intrepidity of the very person, who had so great share in causing it, I made my way with

some difficulty to the ward-room, where my daughters had taken shelter, whilst Mr. Lucas the purser was serenading them with what would have been a country dance, if the ship had not danced so violently out of all time and tune. In this moment the Abbe Hussey, who had followed me, upon a sudden pitch of the ship burst head foremost into the ward-room, and with the momentum of a gun broken loose from its lashings overturned poor Lucas, demolishing his violin, the table, and every thing frangible that his colossal figure came in contact with.

[illegible] situation on the 9th of May, and when upon the morning following the gale moderated we set the mizen and fore-top-mast stay-sail, and swaying the [illegible]-gallant-mast up, set main-sail and fore-sail, working the pumps to keep the ship free, whilst the sea ran very lofty with a heavy swell. This was the last time the Milford frigate ever went to sea, for by the time we anchored in the Tagus her main-deck exhibited sufficient proofs how completely she was broken-backed by straining in the gale.

I will here relate an incident no otherwise

interesting or curious but as a mere matter of chance, which tends in some degree to shew the credulity of our seafaring countrymen. I had been in the habit of wearing in my pocket a broad silver piece given to me as a *keepsake* by my son George, who received his death at the siege of Charlestown in South Carolina the very day after he had taken command of an armed vessel, to which he was appointed. This piece had been beaten out from a dollar by a marine belonging to the Milford then on the American station, and presented by him to my son then a midshipman on board: on this piece the artist had engraved the Milford in full sail, and on the reverse my coat of arms, and upon my discovering that this same ingenious marine, now become a serjeant, was on the same quarter-deck with me, I had been talking with him upon the incident, and shewing him that I had carefully preserved his present, which to this hour I have done, and am now wearing it in my pocket. This man, though a brave and orderly soldier, had so completely yielded himself up to a kind of religious enthusiasm as to be plunged in the profoundest apathy and indifference towards life;

still he exhibited on this occasion some small show of sensibility at the sight of his own work, and the recollection of an amiable youth, now untimely lost. The wind was adverse to our course, our ship still labouring in a heavy sea, whilst strong and sudden squalls, which every now and then annoyed us, together with the incessant labour of the pumps, denied our people that repose, which their past toils demanded: in this gloomy moment the fancy struck me to make trial of the superstition of the man at the helm by laying this silver piece on the face of the compass, as a charm to turn the wind a point or two in our favour, which I boldly proposed it would do. I found my gallant shipmate eagerly disposed to confide in the experiment, which he put out of all doubt by clinching his belief in it with a deposition upon oath, quite sufficient to convince me of his sincerity, and something more than necessary for the occasion. Accordingly I laid my charm upon the glass of the compass with all the solemnity I could assume, whilst my friend kept his eyes alternately employed upon that and the dog-vane, till in a few minutes with a second oath, much more ornamented and em-

broidered than the former, he announced to the conviction of all present a considerable shift of wind in our favour. Credulity now began to circulate most rapidly through the ship: even the officers seemed to have caught some touches of its influence, and my friend the meditative serjeant raised his eyes with some astonishment from his book, where they had been riveted to a few dirty pages loose and torn, as it seemed, out of Sherlock's volume upon death. My first prediction having succeeded so luckily, I boldly promised them a prize in view, and whimsical as the incident is, yet it so chanced that in a very short time a man at the mast-head sung out two ships bearing north standing to the southward; this happened at one o'clock; at half-an-hour past the sternmost tacked and made sail to the northward; we found our ship gaining fast upon her, and at four hoisted Dutch colours; at three quarters after hoisted St. George's ensign, and fired a shot at her; at five she hoisted French colours and fired a broadside into us, and at 9 she struck, and proved to be the Duc de Coigny private frigate of 28 guns, Mignionet commander, belonging to Gran-

ville; this gallant Frenchman had scarcely pronounced his anathema against the man, that should offer to strike his colours, when his head was blown to atoms by one of our cannon balls: the prize lost her second captain also and had 50 of her men killed and wounded: we had two seamen and one marine killed, and four seaman and one marine wounded.

This was a new and striking spectacle to a landsman like me, and though I am dwelling on an incident which to a naval reader may seem trifling, yet as it was my good fortune to be present at an animating scene, which does [illegible] to every man, who occasionally passes the scene in my situation, I presume I am excusable for my description of it.

When I witnessed the dispatch, with which a ship is cleared for action, the silence and good order so strictly observed, and the commands so distinctly given upon going into action, I was impressed with the greatest respect for the discipline and precision observed on board our ships of war. Such coolness and preparatory arrangement seemed to me a security for success and conquest. Our spirited purser Mr. Lucas performed better with his

musket than his violin, and whilst standing by him on the quarter-deck I plainly saw him pick off a French officer in a green coat, whom he jocularly called the parrot, the last of three whom he had dismissed to their watery graves. My melancholy friend the engraver had his arm shattered by the first fire of the enemy, which he received with the most stoical indifference, and would not be persuaded to leave the quarter-deck till the action was over, when going down to be dressed as my eldest daughter (now Lady Edward Bentinck) was coming up from below, he gallantly presented that very arm to assist her, and when, observing him shrink upon her touching it, she said to him— "Serjeant, I am afraid you are wounded—" he calmly replied—"To be sure I am, Madam, "else I should not have been so bold to have "crossed you on the stairs—" This was a strain of chivalry worthy of the days of old, and something more than Tom Jones's gallantry to Sophia Western, who only offered her his serviceable arm and kept the broken one unemployed. One other incident, though of a very different sort, occurred as I was handing her along the main deck from the bread-room,

when slipping in the blood and brains of a poor fellow, who laid dead beside his gun, an insensible brat, who was boasting and rejoicing at his own escape, cried out—"Have a care, "Miss, how you tread. Look at this fellow; "I stood close by him when he got this "knock: the shot went clear over me, and "this damn'd fool put his head in the way of "it. Was'nt that a droll affair?—"

The shifting the prisoners was a task of danger, as the sea ran very high and they were beastly drunk. In this our people were employed all night: when they had refitted the rigging shot away in the action, and hoisted in the boats, we made sail with the prize in company. The carpenters were employed in repairing the boats, which were stove in shifting the prisoners, of which we took on board 155 French and Americans: Lat. 49° 6′. Long. 1° 45′.

Our surgeon and his assistants being exhausted with their duty on board both ships, my anxiety kept me sleepless through a turbulent night, and I went about the ship to the wounded men, one of whom (James Eaton by name) a quarter-master and one of the finest

fellows I ever saw, expired as I stood by him without any external hurt, having been struck in the side by a splinter. I read the burial service over him the next morning, whilst Abbe Hussey performed that office for the other two, who were Irish and of his communion.

On the 11th we took the prize in tow; we had fresh breezes with dark cloudy weather, and at midnight we wore ship, and in veering having broken the hawser we shortened sail for the prize, but soon after made signal for her to stand about and go into port, which she safely effected. In the course of this day I wrote a song for my amusement descriptive of our action, and adapted it to the tune of—

Whilst here at Deal we're lying, boys
With the noble Commodore,

Our crew were very musically inclined, and we had some passably good singers amongst them, which suggested to me the idea of writing this sea song; we frequently sung it at Lisbon in lusty chorus, but their delicacy would not allow them to let it be once heard till their prisoners were removed; and this was the answer made to me by a common seaman, when I asked why they would not sing it du-

ring the voyage; an objection, which had escaped me, but which I felt the full force of, when stated to me by him.

The song was as follows, and the circumstances, under which it was hastily written, must be my apology for inserting it——

"'Twas up the wind three leagues or more
"We spied a lofty sail;
"Set your top-gallant sails, my boys,
"And closely hug the gale.

"Nine knots the nimble Milford ran,
"Thus, thus, the master cried;
"Hull'd we brought the chace in view,
"And soon were side by side.

"Down goes your Dutch ensign, up Saint George;
"To quarters now all hands;
"With lighted match beside his gun
"Each British hero stands.

"Give fire, our gallant captain cries,
"'Tis done, the cannons roar;
"Stand clear, Mounseers, digest these pills,
"And soon we'll send you more.

"Our chain-shot whistles in the wind,
"Our grape descends like hail—
"Hurrah, my souls! three cheering shouts,
"French hearts begin to quail.

" Rak'd fore and aft her shatter'd hull
" Lets in the briny flood,
" Her decks are carnaged with the slain,
" Her scuppers stream with blood.

" Her French jack shivers in the wind,
" Its lilies all look pale;
" Down it must come, it must come down,
" For Britons will prevail.

" And see! 'tis done: she strikes, she yields;
" Down haughty flag of France:
" Now board her, boys, and on her staff
" The English cross advance!

" There, there triumphantly it flies,
" It conquers and it saves—
" So gaily toss the can about,
" For Britons rule the waves."

During the 12th, 13th and 14th, we had fresh gales and squally, till on the night of the latter, being then in Lat. 44° 2′ Long. 3° 16′. we had light airs and fair weather, when descrying a frigate under English colours to the southward, standing to the northward, we cleared ship for action, but soon after lost sight of her. The next day, viz. the 15th, we saw a fleet of the enemy to the southward standing to the westward, forty-five in number, of which were eight sail of the line and three or four frigates. They proved to be the French

squadron under the command of Tournay, and having brought to on the starboard tack dispatched a line of battle ship in chace of us; coming down in a slanting course she appeared at first to gain upon us, till at half past eight in the evening, (our rate being then better than at twelve knots) she left off chace, having given us her lower guns, whilst the prisoners, expecting us to be captured, became so unruly, that our men were obliged to drive them down with the hand-spikes.

On the 16th we brought to and took a Portuguese pilot on board, passed the Burlings, and the next day at six in the evening anchored with the best bower in eight fathom water, Belem Cas le N. E. Abbe Hussey and I with the second lieutenant landed at the castle, and at eight at night we obtained pratique. We found riding here his majesty's ship Romney, Captain Home, with the Cormorant sloop, Captain John Payne, under the command of Commodore Johnstone.

One of my first employments was to purchase a large stock of oranges for the refreshment of the ship's company, especially the wounded, and of these my friend the serjeant condescended to partake, though he had been

so extremely occupied with his meditations upon death, as hardly to be persuaded to let his arm be dressed, answering all the kind enquiries of his comrades in the most sullen and oftentimes abusive terms—"They were wicked "wretches and deserved damnation for pre-"suming to condole with him. It was God's "good pleasure to exercise his spirit with pain, "and he had supreme satisfaction in bearing "it. What business was it of their's to be "troubling him with their impertinent enqui-"ries?"—This was in the style of his civilest replies: to some his answers were very short and extremely gross.

The day after our arrival we weighed and dropt farther up the river; at night we discharged the prisoners, and the Commodore visited us in his barge. Mr. Hussey prepared for his journey into Spain, and I provided apartments for my family at Mrs. Duer's hotel at Buenos Ayres. The next day the commodore entertained us at Belem, and the day ensuing he, with Captains Home and Payne, dined with us on board.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

Printed by J. Wright, St. John's Square.


00024024

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 21 October, 2015